

BANDWAGON

THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2000



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FRED D. PFENING, JR. EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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THE FRONT COVER

Charles B. Irwin was one of Wyoming's best known citizens in the first three decades of the twentieth century.

He was a rancher, horse dealer, business owner and operator of a large wild west show.

The cover photograph shows him in a Cheyenne Frontier Days parade in 1923. Wyoming Division of Cultural Resources.

THE 2000 CHS CONVENTION

The annual Circus Historical Society convention will be held at the twin cities of Bloomington/Normal, Illinois, beginning Wednesday, September 6 and concluding on Saturday evening, September 9th.

The convention registration fee will be \$98 per person. A registration card will be enclosed for your use in the March-April issue.

Registration will begin on Wednesday afternoon September 6th and concludes the next morning. Carson & Barnes will be our convention circus. It will play Bloomington/Normal on Thursday, September 7th.

Our speakers will make their pre-

sentations in the Circus and Old Main rooms of the Bone Student Center at Illinois State University in Normal. The Bone Center is located on an esplanade along with the Milner Library, home of the famous circus collection. The complex houses numerous restaurants where we can enjoy lunch. Our banquet will be held at the Bone Center on Saturday evening.

An educational and entertaining program is being prepared. Those already on the card as speakers are Linda Fisher with an account of Agnes Lake, the famous Equestrienne; John McConnell describing how he produced and toured his Circus Royale; Brett Mizelle with "The Downfall of Taste and Genius--Animal Exhibitions and the Struggle Over Acceptable Leisure in the Early 19th Century;" Nigel Rothfels, the Carl Hagenbeck scholar, discussing Hagenbeck and the circus in the 19th and early 20th centuries; Bill Slout and his "Two Rings and a Hippodrome Track," the story of how and when one ring became two and then three; Stuart Thayer with a slide show on early

bandwagons; and Cherie Valentine telling the story of her family, the Flying Valentinos of Bloomington, Illinois. Other stimulating speakers will be added as we round out our program.

Convention headquarters will be the Best Western University Inn, 6 Traders Circle, Normal, Illinois 61761. Attendees should make their own reservations by calling the Inn's reservation desk (309) 454-4070 Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM. Make sure to ask for the "Circus Historical Society Block." Rooms in our block have a special rate, single or double, of \$50 per night (plus an additional 8.5% Illinois Hotel tax). Registrants may choose either a King Bed Room or a 2 Double Bed Room. Rooms at our special rate are limited and members are urged to register as soon as possible.

The University Inn is located at I-55 and US 51 (Exit 165), only a mile north of the Illinois State campus. The Inn's amenities include a free continental breakfast and a courtesy van to and from the airport.

See you in Normal in September.

NEW MEMBERS

Bindlestiff Family Circus	4227
P.O. Box 1917	
New York, NY 10009	

Willis "Will" Shane	4228
1202 Lincoln Ave.	
Ottawa, IL 61350	

M. Lane Talbert	4229
2609 Virginia	
St. Louis, MO 63118	

REINSTATED

Philip J. Thornick	2203
809 Oak Hill Rd.	
Binghamton, NY 12901	

ADDRESS CHANGES

The problem of address changes continues. Over a dozen copies of the November-December *Bandwagon* have been returned with corrected addresses, each with a charge of \$1.68 each from the post office.

These returned copies will not be replaced. Replacement copies are available at the back issue price of \$3.50 plus \$2 shipping.

Please send your changes.

Royal

HANNEFORD CIRCUS

Introduces for the 2000 season a beautiful new 12 horse and pony liberty act trained by John Herriott and presented by Nellie Hanneford.

During the season we will play over sixty dates, indoors and under our four big tops.

We will be delighted to welcome you to America's largest independent circus producing company at our dates across the country.

TOMMY - STRUPPI - NELLIE

IRWIN BROS. WILD WEST SHOW

CHEYENNE
FRONTIER DAYS

By Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

August 1, 1999 was the final day of the 103rd Cheyenne Frontier Days, "The Daddy of 'em All." This exhibition and a Cheyenne cowboy were intertwined in a wild west show that took the road in 1910. It differed from the others as it was basically a traveling rodeo.

Charles Burton Irwin, the man who headed the show, was born in Chillicothe, Missouri on August 14, 1875. In 1899 the Irwin family settled in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He was employed by a Omaha, Nebraska packing plant that held a contract to supply beef to the Indians at the Standing Rock Agency at Fort Yates, North Dakota. A year later Irwin returned to Cheyenne and went to work as a blacksmith. He worked as a cowboy at a large ranch near Cheyenne, and then went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad as a livestock agent. Taking advantage of the National Homesteading Act he bought contiguous parcels of land in

the names of all of his family. This became the Y-6 ranch.

For many years he was closely identified with the Cheyenne Frontier Days celebration, first as a contestant winning the steer roping championship in 1900 and repeating in 1906. At one time he and his entire family, Mrs. Irwin, his son and three daughters, participated. He later served in an executive capacity and activity promoted the Frontier Days celebration until his death.

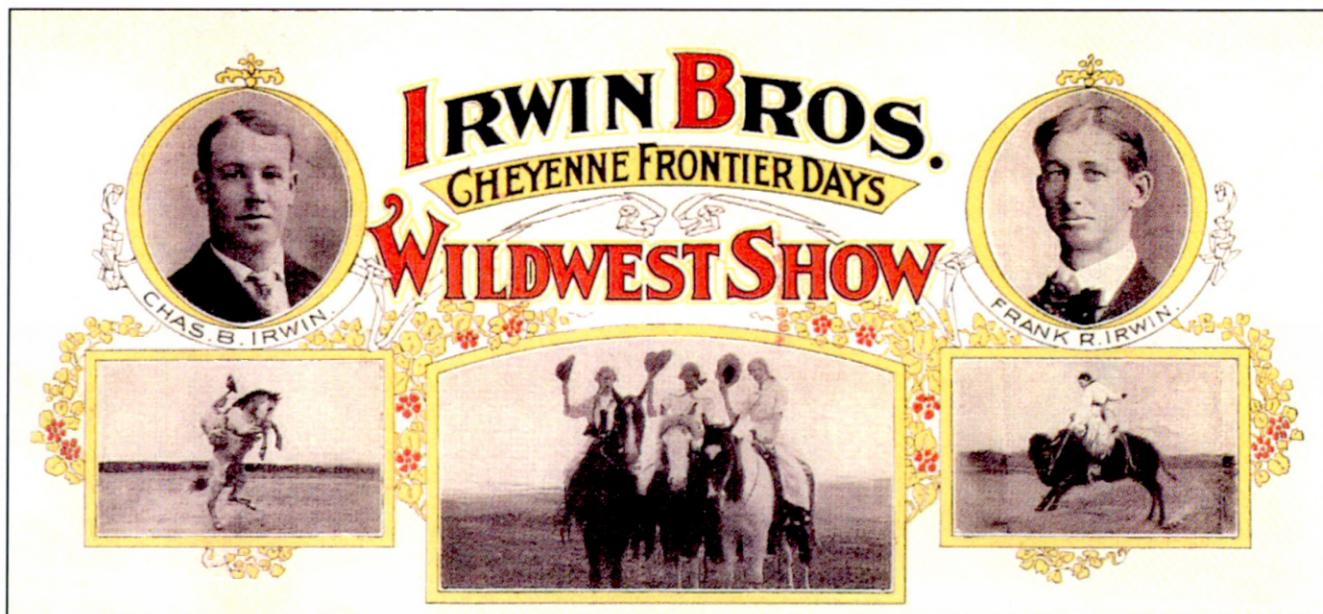
He built a barn, corrals and cookhouse on the grounds of Frontier Park in Cheyenne. While representing the Cheyenne Frontier Days he attended meetings of the National Convention of Fair Boards. The boards told him of their interest in a western type attraction. This led to the organization of the 1910 show. By

Letterhead used by Irwin Bros. Wild West in 1913. Circus World Museum collection.

then, the Irwins were wealthy land owners, operating a ten thousand acre cattle ranch.

On January 16, 1909 Irwin incorporated the Irwin Brothers Live Stock Company in Wyoming. The certificate of incorporation listed Charles B. Irwin, Frank R. Irwin and William H. Irwin as shareholders. William, known as Will, did not travel with the show but remained at the ranch. The capital stock was \$100,000, divided in 1,000 shares with a par value of \$100 per share. The name of the corporation was later changed to the Irwin Live Stock and Show Company.

In 1910 Charles Hersig, a successful Cheyenne banker, joined with the Irwins in the ownership of the Irwin and Hersig Wild West. Hersig was solely an investor and not active in the operation of the show. According to the May 1955 *Western Horseman*, the Irwin & Hersig show opened after the 1910 Cheyenne Frontier





Charles Irwin in 1913. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

Days and played the California State Fair followed by fairs in Salt Lake City, and Ogden, Utah and Sacramento, California. Art Accord, a well-known silent film star, rode Old Steamboat, Irwin's famous bronc horse.

The show was framed mainly to play celebrations and large fair grandstands. It likely traveled in railroad system baggage cars and coaches.

Among his other business ventures Charley Irwin dabbled in motion picture production. In 1912 he organized the Cheyenne Feature Film Company whose purpose was to make movies of the Cheyenne Frontier Days and realistic wild west productions of the plains and mountains in southern Wyoming and northern Colorado. The company was to have studios in Cheyenne and with a \$100,000 capital investment it was ready for the world.

Research has uncovered only one film produced by the company. A contract was signed on October 24, 1912 with Benjamin Barr Lindsey to produce a film about his nationally renowned juvenile court in Denver. It was agreed that the Judge would receive 20% of the gross receipts from the sale of the film. The Judge in turn agreed to give 55% of his share to some good cause for children. George Creel, a former Denver police commissioner, was also to

receive 5% of the gross receipts. In July 1913 the three reel film was shown at the Orpheum theater in Cheyenne. A number of Cheyenne cowboys appeared in the film.

1913

Together with his brother, Frank, Charles Irwin organized a 25 car wild west show for the 1913 season. By then Irwin and Hersig had had a friendly parting, with Irwin buying Hersig's interest.

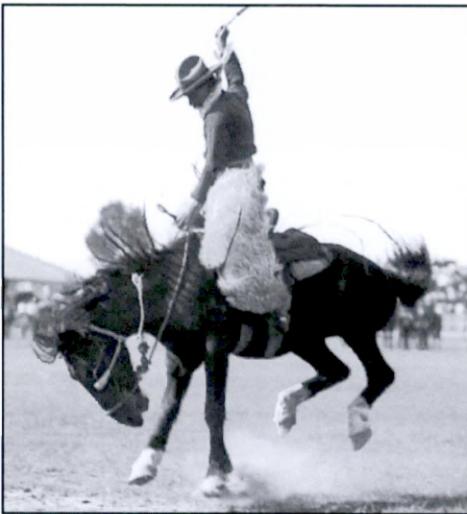
The new show was called Irwin Bros. Cheyenne Frontier Days Wild West Show. It was framed at the Irwins' Y-6 ranch near Cheyenne, and traveled on 8 flat cars, 13 stock cars, 2 coaches, 3 sleepers, 1 box car and 1 advance car. A feature was Old Steamboat, "the worst outlaw horse in the world."

The Irwin show used a large number of stock cars to accommodate horses. In 1913 only the Buffalo Bill Pawnee Bill show, among wild westerners, with 14 stock cars had more horses. Miller Bros. 101 Ranch had 9 stocks and Arlington & Beckmann Oklahoma Ranch had 4 stocks.

Although much of the 1913 season was played at state fairs, the show was framed to play one day stands. It had a side show, cookhouse and paraded each day. An advance car carried a full crew of bill posters and lithographers, posting a full line of paper.

Irwin was a leading supplier of

A group of cowboys and cowgirls on the 1913 show. Jane Bernoudy and Marie Danks are seated on each side of Charlie Irwin at right. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.



Old Steamboat, the famous bucking horse. Wyoming Division of Cultural Resources.

stock for rodeos. Ever the businessman, he purchased his own stock cars to move the horses, thus saving on freight. He then bought passenger cars to transport his personnel. Since he had rolling stock, it wasn't a big leap for him to add wagons, tents and flat cars to play the one and two day stands between the large fairs, thus making money on what otherwise would have been down time between engagements.

The May 31, 1913 *Billboard* reported the Irwins had purchased a canvas arena from Baker & Lockwood at a cost of \$10,000. The short article said the show would play fair dates at Winnipeg, Manitoba, July 8-16; Grand Forks, North Dakota, July 21-26; Hamline, Minnesota, September 1-6; Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 8-13; Sioux City, Iowa, September 15-20; Omaha, Nebraska, September 20-October 4 and Muskogee, Oklahoma, October 6-11.

Little is known about the origin of the show's equipment. A 1913 photo shows two parade wagons that had formerly been on Lemon Bros. and the Pan American circuses. The two wagons later wound up at the Hall Farm in Lancaster, Missouri. This suggests that a major part of the Irwin equipment came from Hall.

Irwin also ordered new wagons from the Beggs Wagon

Company in Kansas City. A stringer wagon in a 1913 Irwin photo appears to be the same as one photographed at the Beggs factory, at least the lettering is the same.

Charles Irwin's three daughters, Joella, Pauline and Frances, appeared in the performance as did son Floyd. Most of the other performers had received championship awards at rodeos.

The May 24 *Billboard* wrote, "Hutton S. Rowe (of the Norris & Rowe Circus) has accepted the position of general agent with Irwin Bros. wild west. This organization opens at Cheyenne, Wyoming on June 14 and will play one-day stands until the opening of the fair season, when it will be featured at many of the big events."

C. B. Irwin, manager of the organization, is very knowing in wild west matters. He has many champions and a great lot of real talent.

Mr. Rowe advises that there is hardly a doubt that Mr. Irwin will have the best real wild west performance in the country. We presume, however, that he is willing to admit that there may be some diversity on that score, especially among proprietors of other wild west combinations.

"Mr. Rowe is very enthusiastic over the organization's prospects."

As the opening day drew near, the Cheyenne Frontier Association created a problem for Irwin. On June 8 the *Wyoming Tribune* reported: "The Cheyenne Frontier Association applied to Judge W. C. Mentzer for an injunction restraining Charles B. and

A group of Indians and wild west riders in front of the marquee in 1913. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

Frank Irwin, proprietors of Irwin Bros. Wild West show, from using the name 'Cheyenne Frontier Days' in connection with their show.

"The association's petition sets forth that for fifteen years and longer Cheyenne has given a 'Frontier Days' or 'Frontier' celebration; that the name has come to be associated with the local celebration; that the Irwin Bros. show is no part or parcel of the Cheyenne celebration and that, therefore the Irwins should not be permitted to prostitute the city's public celebration to the ends of advertising their private enterprise.

"The committee believes the object and intent of the Irwin Bros. is to help their wild west show at the expense of the Cheyenne Frontier show; and if possible leave the impression they are carrying the Frontier and that after June 14 there will be no Frontier show in Cheyenne this year."

A day later the Irwins responded: "Charles B. and Frank Irwin of Irwin Bros. Wild West show, have retained W. C. Kinkead and will combat the attempt of the Cheyenne Frontier association to prevent them from using the name 'Cheyenne Frontier' in advertising their performances.

"Irwin Bros. this morning subpoenaed several witnesses. It is inti-

Irwin Bros. Cheyenne Frontier Days WILD WEST SHOW CHEYENNE

JUNE 14

LET'S GO!!

SPECIAL EXCURSION RATES
ONE and ONE-THIRD FARE from all points in Wyoming
on Union Pacific Ry. Lowest ever given any attraction.
Cool, Gear Comfortable Seats for 10,000 People

TWO BIG BANDS
FRANK CARTER World's Champion Bronco Buster—Winner of Contest at Cheyenne 1912
PAULINE IRWIN Winner of Ladies' Relay at Cheyenne 1912

"SCOUT" MAJISCH Champion Roper Frontier contest.
JOELLA IRWIN Winner of Ladies' Relay at Cheyenne 1911

FLOYD IRWIN NEW TRICK RIDING and ROPE FEATURES
Mrs. W. H. Irwin TWICE CHAMPION LADIES AT FRONTIER
Will again enter the arena after many recreations

SCOTTY and PETE ONLY TRAINED BULLS FALO IN EXISTENCE
MONTANA JACK RAY The Most Seemingly Trick Rider in Any Land
FANNY SPERRY STEELE DANCED LAST SUMMER BETTER THAN EVER IN CALIFORNIA, 1912

Gladys Irwin FINEST HORSEWOMAN IN THE WEST
CLAYTON DANKS TWICE WINNER OF THE WORLD'S CHAMPIONSHIP AT CHEYENNE

BIG SIDE SHOW
Containing the NEWEST and CLEANEST Attractions Ever Displayed Under Canvas.

Two Performances
Afternoon at 2 Evening at 8
Doors Open One Hour before Big Show Commences

MONSTER STREET Spectacle
Biggest Ever Seen in Cheyenne—AT NOON
DON'T MISS IT

30—CARLOADS OF THE BEST WILD WEST FEATURES IN THE WORLD—30

IRWIN BROS. REAL CHEYENNE WILD WEST SHOW

30—CARLOADS OF THE BEST WILD WEST FEATURES IN THE WORLD—30

MONSTER STREET Spectacle
Biggest Ever Seen in Cheyenne—AT NOON
DON'T MISS IT

This full page advertisement appeared in the *Cheyenne State Leader* a few days before the 1913 opening. Wyoming State Archives.

mated that the name which the Cheyenne celebration has made famous has been copyrighted by an agent of the Irwins."

Meanwhile the Irwins ran a number of full page ads using the Frontier Days name in local papers.

On June 14 the *Tribune* reported: "Irwin Bros. wild west show, the first traveling show of circus magnitude conceived, financed, collected, arranged, managed and owned by Wyomingites, today is giving its initial performance in a great canvas arena in the northwest part of the city. A large crowd is in attendance and is manifesting its approval by demonstrations which may be heard down town.

"The first public appearance of the show troupe was made today at noon when a parade was formed and proceeded through the business district. It surpassed in magnitude, equipment and effect any similar pageant given here, Col. W. F. Cody's Buffalo



Bill congress of rough riders not excepted.

"The parade was led by 'Big Chief' Charlie Irwin and Frank Irwin, his brother, who are owners, and was participated in by more good riders, ropers and other performers of wild west feats of daring before have been associated under one management. Indians were a conspicuous feature.

"Regardless of opinion as to whether the use of the name 'Cheyenne Frontier' by Irwin Bros. is proper, or is not proper, opinion was general on the street after this morning's parade that the wild west show which will be heralded as from Cheyenne is of magnitude not incompatible with local pride.

"A second performance will be given this evening, and it then will take the road leaving tomorrow."

The show opened in Cheyenne on June 14. It then jumped to Sidney, Nebraska and remained in that state until July 1. Three stands were played in Iowa and one in Minnesota before playing the Winnipeg, Manitoba fair from July 7 to 14th.

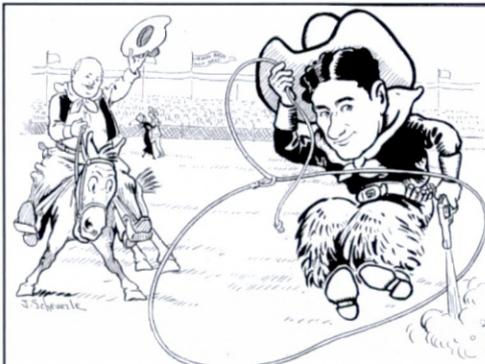
The August 9th *Billboard* reported: "Grand Forks, North Dakota, July 25. The big attraction at the state fair, which is being held this week, is the Irwin Bros. Wild West Show. Yesterday saw the biggest crowds in the history of that fair, and the least for today is expected to be 25,000. The Irwin Bros. annex has broken all records. It is operated by E. W. Ryan. Fred A Stone, a famous comedian, arrived last night, and will go join the show.

"H. Jenkins is superintendent of privileges and A Jenkins is general announcer.

"Frank Irwin was awarded a cup as champion trick roper at the Sioux City, Iowa fair on July 4."

The legal problems with the Frontier Days Association were apparently resolved in a friendly manner with Irwin agreeing to discontinue the use of Frontier Days in the title of the show. A 1913 photo taken in Grand Forks, North Dakota shows part of the title painted out on the marquee. Irwin, however, had a large stock of lithographs, letterheads and advertising cuts on hand, which he continued to use.

The Irwin show was completely



This drawing of C. B. Irwin, left, and Fred Stone was published in the October 4, 1913 New York *Clipper*. Pfening Archives.

outfitted like any or circus or wild west show, but was basically a rodeo on rails. It did not present a typical wild west performance, except for a group of Russian Cossacks and a group of trained buffaloes. It carried fifty Sioux Indians from Pine Ridge, South Dakota reservation. Missing from the performance were military units from other countries, a common feature of other wild west programs. Typical wild west acts such liberty, high school and high jumping horses, Roman riders, lancers, boomerang throwers and educated mules were not a part of the performance. The performance included cowboys, cowgirls, trick ropers, bulldoggers, bronc riders, horse racers, trick riders and clowns. The show paraded every day, even on multiday stands.

The printed program listed the performance as: "Grand entry introducing Cowboys from the Irwin Bros. famous ten thousand-acre Y-6 ranch on Little and Big Horse Creeks in Wyoming; Clayton Danks, six times champion rough rider of the world, chief of cowboys; band of full blooded Sioux Indians from the Pine Ridge Reservation, Chiefs Red Cloud and Makes Enemy; cowgirls of the Y-6 ranch, Mrs. Clayton Danks, four times lady champion relay rider of the world; Irwin Bros. only team of buffalo in the world broken to ride and drive; the original Old Steamboat, champion bucking horse of the world; Pauline and Gladys Irwin, champion lady relay riders of the world; Bob Lee, champion relay rider of the world, winner of the \$1,200 prize at Lincoln, Nebraska in

1912; Floyd Irwin, 'Montana Jack' Ray and Kid Mex, world's greatest trick riders and ropers; 'Scout' Maish of Oklahoma, winner of world's roping championship at Cheyenne, 1912, and famous trick rider and bulldogger; 'Prairie Rose' Henderson of Cheyenne, winner of the ladies' bucking championship at the rodeo, Los Angeles, 1912, and Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1912; Fanny Sperry of Montana, winner of the championship belt and \$1,200 prize for ladies' bucking contest at Calgary, Alberta, Stampede in 1912, defeating such riders as Goldie St. Clair and others; Our Flag, 'Old Glory.'

The show played the Minnesota State Fair in Minneapolis from September 1 to 6. The Wisconsin State Fair in West Allis, outside Milwaukee, was played from September 8 to 13. One day stands were resumed at Evanston, Illinois on September 15.

The following article by Joe Hepp, actually Warren Patrick, was published in the September 27 New York *Clipper*: "The Irwin Brothers Cheyenne Frontier Days Wild West Show exhibited in Evanston, Illinois, Monday, September 15. The performances gave general satisfaction, being of a real wild west variety. There is a saying current in the show business, When you see one, you see them all, but the Irwin brothers' exhibition is different from the rest.

"To put the show on the lot requires a space 300 x 400 feet. The canopy, proper, is 280 x 112. The canvas and seating equipment is first class throughout. The cook tent is clean and neat.

"The Irwin brothers show is transported on 28 cars, and the rolling stock is in splendid condition.

"Probably the most remarkable show family in existence is that composed of the Irwin brothers, their wives and children. It is seldom, if ever, that every member of a family show has an adaptability for the exhibition business, but this is true of the Irwins. It is certain that no other family contains more champions than this. Charles B. Irwin, who has supreme charge of the arena entertainment, has won the roping championship at Cheyenne; Frank

Irwin is a champion bronco buster and won the men's relay race at Cheyenne Frontier Days; Mrs. W. H. Irwin has twice won the ladies' championship; Floyd Irwin is a champion trick rider and roper; Joella Irwin and Pauline Irwin have each won the ladies' championship and Gladys Irwin has only been defeated in this event by her cousin. Never before in the history of the show world has so remarkable a record been established.

"Ever since the Irwin brothers first became interested in the Cheyenne Frontier Days' Show over a decade ago, they have been adding more and more to the attractions of that exhibition, as well as to their own, until they now have one of the finest wild west shows in the business.

"The writer is justified in believing that the Irwin brothers will project a wild west show next season to tour the country in a regular way instead of playing state fairs and expositions, with a few one day stands to fill out the tour. I have every reason to predict that if the Messrs. Irwin surround themselves with a high class executive staff, in the advance and back with the show, that their enterprise will create a niche for itself second to none in the arena field of entertainment.

"The Irwin Bros.' show impresses one with its realism. It brings to the effete East a zephyr from the Western prairies. It exemplifies the sports and pastimes, the trials and tribulations, the triumphs and the exhilaration of the Far West. Probably never before have so many champions in their respective spheres been brought together as are assembled with Irwin brothers' aggregation. There is nothing tawdry, nothing bizarre, nothing frothy about this show. It is wild west, pure and simple. The fact that the Irwin brothers are armed with nigh unlimited financial resources has not swelled their sense of self appreciation to any marked degree, for Charles Irwin is on the job in the arena from the time the show starts until the announcer makes it known that it is all over.

"And to those who attended the performance of the Irwin Bros. show, that exhibited at Evanston last Monday, it was readily apparent that

under Chas. B.'s supervision every participant in the entertainment was keenly alive to his or her responsibilities.

"The fact that on the reserved seats were the members of the Fred B. Stone-Dave Montgomery-Elsie Janis, *The Lady of the Slipper Company*, and that Fred B. Stone played an important part in the entertainment, undoubtedly added zest to the efforts put forth for the edification of an audience which was not stingy in its applause. Fred

Newspaper advertisement used by Irwin Bros. at Clinton, Illinois in 1913. Circus World Museum collection.



Stone is a near and dear friend to the Irwin brothers, for during the spring and early summer months, prior to his taking up his theatrical duties, he spends much time on their ranch, at Cheyenne, and has become proficient in the use of the lasso. Attired in regulation cowboy chaps, with a sombrero, a red bandanna around his neck, and, thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the occasion. Fred Stone made a bigger hit, perhaps, as a Wild Westerner in the Irwin brothers' arena than he has ever made behind the footlights on the stage. Salvoes of applause reverberated as he successfully roped the untamed horses let loose in the arena. Even the Indians, accustomed as they are to extraordinary feats of lariats on the plains, plainly showed their amazement at the difficult evolution's with the rope performed by actor Stone. It would have done your heart good to have seen Fred rigged out in full regalia, on the top of the Deadwood stage coach, when it was attacked by the forty Indians, and there was a thrill of excitement as Chas. B. Irwin, at the head of his doughty cowboys and ranchmen, wounded on their mustangs, swept into the arena and saved the situation, which, to say the least, gave the folks on the seats more or less concern. Elsie Janis clapped her hands and Dave Montgomery, in a fever of excitement, threw his hat into the arena and shouted get 'em Fred,' but alas, poor Fred had been shot by Chief Red Cloud, who headed the attacking Indian band.

"But to get right down to the meat of the thing the Irwin brothers have the making of a wonderful show. Of course, it will go down in show history that never before has a \$1,750 a week man appeared in a wild west arena, and between you and me, I don't believe it would take much of an argument to induce Fred Stone to become a regular wild west actor. While he is the proud possessor of valuable real estate on Manhattan Island, and enjoys a unique standing in the theatrical business, yet, from the conversation I had with him after the show Monday afternoon as we were being taken to the depot in the Deadwood stage coach, along with Wallie Cochrane, Charles B. Irwin and Joseph Schourle, artist for the



A group of Irwin performers in front of the former Lemon Bros. Circus tableau. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

National Printing Company, I am inclined to believe that if the Irwin brothers do as is predicted, put out a monster wild west exhibition next season, it would not take much persuasion on their part to get Fred as a stellar feature. And why not? Stranger things have happened. When I recall that but a few years ago the Miller brothers came to Chicago from their ranch at Bliss, Oklahoma, and gave their exhibition in the Coliseum, untutored in the show business, having little or no knowledge of its technique, but determined to present to a waiting world exhibitions of real wild west life, and note what a wonderful advance they have made in the estimation of the multitude in projecting the 101 Ranch Wild West Show, I can see no reason why the Irwin brothers should not with their ample finances, with their 'champions' and

The sideshow band seated in front of the remodeled former Lemon Bros. Circus bandwagon. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

their grit speedily assume a recognized status, and with Fred B. Stone as one of their leading features leap into immediate prominence and gather in many shekels of the realm.

"The fact that the Buffalo Bill-Pawnee Bill shows are out of the running affords opportunity for another wild west aggregation. It is understood, of course, that Buffalo Bill is to be identified with the Sells-Floto Circus in 1914, and thereafter, and from all accounts that combination will cause a stir in the show world. But there is plenty of room for another good wild west exhibition. Too much dependence cannot be placed upon the rumor that Pawnee Bill is to be identified with Gov. Vernon C. Seaver, in a wild west combination next year, although it would not be surprising if this came about. Ours is a great big country, and there is room for such a show as the Irwin brothers could put out, and no doubt will. Every department of their present organization is perfectly equipped--not a single detail has been overlooked for the comfort of their people, and no expense spared in making the paraphernalia as good as money can buy and it leads us to believe that, bursting upon the hori-

zon of 1914, will emerge a new gigantic enterprise to bid for popular favor.

"There is something about the ozone of the Far West--the air of the prairies--the smell of the sage-brush--the atmosphere of Western good fellowship--the inspiration of the Frontier--the heroism of the plains--the struggle of the pioneers, and last, but not least, the master mentality of the up-to-date showmen, superinduced by all of these environments that justifies the assurance that if the Irwin brothers do determine to make a forward step and enter the regular ranks of public entertainers, their competitors will have to look to their laurels.

"Now, something about the personnel of the Irwin brothers' show. And for the nonce, permit me to say, right now, there is an atmosphere about the show which is distinctly individual. No red tape, no confusion, all is orderly, everyone in his proper place, and from the time you arrive on the lot until you leave there is evidence of a Western homelike atmosphere, just as if you were on the Y-6 Ranch in Cheyenne, where hospitality abounds, and where Eastern friends are always welcome.

"The Irwin brothers are the proprietors and general directors; Frank L. Miner is the treasurer; Clayton Danks, superintendent; George Dynan, general agent and traffic manager; 'Scout' Frank Maish, equestrian director; Bill Sweeney, trainmaster; Everett McGuckin, superintendent of commissary; Mrs. C. B. Irwin, superintendent main entrance; George Wells, superintendent of canvas; W. H. Irvin, boss hostler; Chuck Gammon, superintendent of reserved seats and official announcer; Neal Rowell, superintendent of lights; Ed Sprague, boss porter; Frank C. Miller, ammunition man; Burt Cole, boss blacksmith; Al Fairbrother, bandmaster; H. E. Murray, twenty-four hour man; Harry Ewing, car manager; Lewis Berg, contracting agent; H. Jenkins, superintendent of privileges; Ellis Black, press agent; Art Jamieson, manager of side show, and Bunk Baxter, assistant manager of side show, will join at Omaha.

"As is usual, in Evanston, the business in the afternoon was fair but capacity at night. Wallie Cochrane



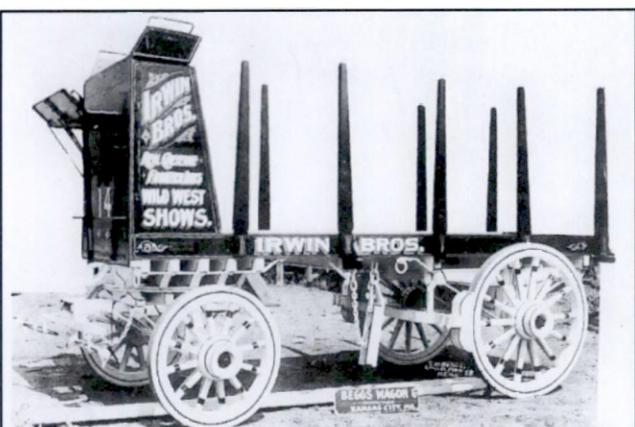
entertained a party of prominent Evanstonians at the night performance, who were escorted to the lot, from the Dempster Street station, in the Deadwood stage coach, graciously provided by Charles B. Irwin.

"After playing cities in Illinois and Iowa, the Irwin brothers will exhibit in Omaha, Nebraska, September 26 to October 4, inclusive."

The following appeared in the September 27 New York *Clipper*: "The official program of the Irwin Bros. Cheyenne Frontier Days Wild West Show is as follows: Grand Entry Introduction--Cowboys from the Irwin Bros. famous ten thousand acre Y-6 Ranch on Little and Big Horse Creeks in Wyoming; Clayton Danks, six time champion rough rider of the world, chief of cowboys; band of full blooded Sioux Indians from the Pine Ridge Reservation, Chief Red Cloud and Makes Enemy; cowgirls of the Y-6 Ranch, Mrs. Clayton Danks, four times lady champion relay rider of the world; Irwin Bros. only team of buffalo in the world broken to ride and drive; the original 'Old Steamboat,' champion bucking horse of the world; Pauline and Gladys Irwin, champion

The cover of the 1913 program of Irwin Bros. Wild West. Pfening Archives.

lady relay riders of the world; Bob Lee, champion relay rider of the world, winner of the \$1,200 prize at Lincoln, 1912; Floyd Irwin, 'Montana Jack' Ray, and Kid Mex, world's greatest trick riders and ropers; 'Scout' Maish, of Oklahoma, winner of world's roping championship at Cheyenne, 1912, and famous trick-rider and bulldogger; 'Prairie Rose' Henderson, of Cheyenne, winner of the ladies' bucking championship at the Rodeo, Los Angeles, 1912, and Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1912; Fanny Sperry, of Montana, winner of the championship belt and \$1,200 prize for ladies' bucking contest at Calgary, Alberta, Stampede, 1912, defeating such riders as Goldie St. Clair and others; Our Flag, Old Glory, and C B. Irwin, general manager, and one of the principal owners of Irwin Bros.' Cheyenne Frontier Days Wild West Show."



A stringer wagon built by Beggs Wagon Company. Pfening Archives.

1914

The 1913 season was financially successful, prompting an enlarged show. Additional cars, probably stocks, brought the total to thirty. During 1914 the *Billboard* listed nineteen wild west shows on tour.

New wagons were built by the Beggs Wagon Co. The only known photos of the wagons were taken at the Beggs factory in Kansas City, Missouri. Beggs likely furnished more than the three wagons in the photos. It is not clear if all of the Beggs wagons were new in 1914. Some may have been on the show in 1913.

During the winter little was heard about the Irwin operation. On April 5, 1914 Charles Irwin wrote to William P. Hall: "Would you please advise me as to what you have on hand in the show line? We open up May 15th.

"Have you one of the new calliope made by the Pneumatic Calliope Co.?

"Have you any elephants and are they broke to any acts.

"Also have you any wagons and cars?

"Hoping to hear from you fully. I remain, Yours truly, C. B. Irwin."

Irwin Bros. advertised in the May 16 *Billboard*, wanting back all the people who were with the show in 1913, a few real contest and wild west people and a few good people in all departments. The show was to play a number of big fairs and contests where thousands of dollars would be given away. The well known roper Bee Ho Gray joined the show.

A full page Irwin Bros. advertise-

PROGRAMME
AND SOUVENIR
IRWIN BROS. CHEYENNE
FRONTIER DAYS
Wild West Show

CHAS. B. IRWIN and FRANK IRWIN, Sole Owners
Permanent Address
Y6 Ranch, Cheyenne, Wyo.

ment appeared in the June 8 Cheyenne State Leader. It told of the special excursion rates on the Union Pacific railroad at one and one-third fare from all towns in Wyoming.

On June 13 this article appeared in the Wyoming Tribune: "A delegation of Cheyenne businessmen welcomed a trade excursion of the Milwaukee Merchants & Manufacturer's Association.

"On their arrival here the visitors will be met by a band from Irwin Bros. Wild West show and the Irwins' rough riders and ropers. They will be placed in an old stage coach and several ranch wagons and taken to the winter quarters of the Irwin show where they will be entertained with a wild west performance. At the conclusion of this the visitors will board automobiles for a ride to points of interest in and about the city."

The Wyoming Tribune published this article on June 12: "Bigger and better than ever, the Irwin Bros. Real Wild West Show is daily assembling and getting into shape for the 1914 tour, which will embrace nine states and include many of the larger cities. Manager C. B. Irwin has details at his finger tips and under his direction his lieutenants are perfecting arrangements that will place an almost perfect working organization the road.

"Headliners are putting on the final touches to their acts and eliminating any rustiness that is so often the result of the winter's layoff. Cowpunchers from off the range, choose out-of-the-way places where they work their ponies and daily practice 'thrillers' that will bring thousands of spectators to their feet in spontaneous admiration for their daring and cleverness.

"Wagons have been repainted and repaired and harness and trappings burnished and cleaned after the winter's rest. The dozens of show horses that appeal to the crowds that throng the sidewalks when the parade goes by are groomed until their coats shine—every animal is in the pink of condition. To the lover of horseflesh, they are a feast for the eye.



Air calliope wagon built by the Beggs Wagon Company. Pfening Archives.

"The band of fifty Sioux Indians, in charge of Frank Goings, interpreter, will arrive Thursday and go into camp at headquarters.

"Two bands, one from Chicago and one from Omaha, are due Tuesday. The one from Omaha, is a colored organization under the leadership of Sam H. Lane, long celebrated as the leader of the famous Georgia minstrels.

"Experienced circus men trained in their various departments, will have arrived by the middle of the week when over 300 will be assembled and the show organization completed,

"Many new acts and novel acts

A group of cowboys posing in front of an Irwin Bros. bill stand. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

will be on the bill this season and these will include stars from the United States, the Canadian Northwest and Australia.

"Thirty-six cars in two trains will be required to transport the aggregation. These are being assembled day by day. All will have received from the shops before the end of the week."

Another article appeared in the Wyoming Tribune on June 16: "Irwin Bros. wild West show yesterday afternoon and last evening entertained two large audiences at the big canvas arena in the

Hellman Addition. This afternoon a third audience is witnessing the daring deeds of the rough riders. The local engagement will close with tonight's performance, after which the show will depart for the east.

"The best wild west ever given inside canvas is the general opinion of Cheyenne people who have witnessed Irwin Bros. performance in their stunts. The popularity of the proprietors and their families was attested time and again at yesterday's performances with warm applause.

"Last night's performance provided a good many thrills which were not anticipated. Heavy sprinkling caused the arena to be very slippery at one point and several accidents occurred. Gladys Irwin was caught beneath her horse when the animal slipped at this point and was carried from the arena unconscious. Before the show ended she was back, however, giddy from her fall, but game. The crowd



gave her an ovation.

"Throughout, the work of the performers was constantly excellent. The rough riding was extremely spectacular. The ensemble was impressive.

"Favorites with the crowd naturally were the Irwin boys and girls who have been reared here. Floyd Irwin, a remarkable rider, rope expert and trainer of horses, earned enthusiastic applause time and time again. The diminutive daughter of Frank Irwin, so young that she appears tiny even on the smallest of ponies but already exemplifying the Irwin trait of remarkable horsemanship, was a pronounced favorite with the spectators.

"The best wishes of Cheyenne people will go with the Irwin show when it takes the road tonight."

The July 4 *Billboard* reported: "The Irwin Bros. Real Wild West Show opened the 1914 season at Cheyenne, Wyoming June 15 and 16. Cheyenne, the home of the famous Frontier Days and winter quarters of the show turned out four critical crowds and it was the unanimous verdict, voiced through the local press, that the attraction, to the minute detail, will correctly advertise Cheyenne's great annual celebration.

"The show is on the road this season with 300 people and 30 cars."

The 1914 printed program listed this performance: "Opening overture. Irwin Bros. Wild West and Military Band, directed by the famous musician, Al Fairbrother.

"Event No. 1. Grand entry and review of Irwin Bros. congress of rough riders and noted people from the Y-6 Ranch.

"Event No. 2. Introducing the principal characters and featured people, which includes the champions of every known western sport.

"Event No. 3. Quadrille on horseback by the cowgirls and cowboys of the Y-6 Ranch.

"Event No. 4. Indian war dance by the Sioux Indians of the Pine Ridge Agency, South Dakota, headed by Chiefs Red Cloud and Makes Enemy, two of the principals in the great

IRWIN BROTHERS REAL WILD WEST SHOW

JUNE 15th and 16th

TWO----PERFORMANCES DAILY----TWO
STREET PARADE EACH MORNING AT 10:30

300 People Cowboys
30 - Cars - 30 Cougars
and Sioux Indians
2 - Bands - 2 Buckers

For the 1914 tour of Irwin Brothers' they have gathered about them the greatest aggregation of stars ever known to any Wild West exhibition.

CHEYENNE, THE WINTER QUARTERS OF IRWIN BROTHERS, WILL BE GENUINELY SURPRISED WHEN IT SEES THE SPECTACLE--THE PAGEANT OF THE REAL WEST--THAT WILL BE PRESENTED ON THE IRWIN BROTHERS' OPENING DATES.

IT WILL SEE CHAMPIONS FROM CANADA, MEXICO, AUSTRALIA, AND THE GOOD OLD U. S. A., ACCUSTOMED TO THE ANCIENT FRONTIER SHOWS. IT WILL BE ABLE TO JUDGE WHETHER OR NOT THE IRWIN BROTHERS CAN CORRECTLY ADVERTISE CHEYENNE'S GREAT SHOW, WHILE TRAVELING THROUGH NINE STATES, AND SHOWING BEFORE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE.

Big Rain Proof Canopy Top, Seating
10,000 People

Afternoon Performance 2 o'clock—Evening Performance 7:45 o'clock
Admission 50c Children 50c

Newspaper ad used in Cheyenne prior to the opening of the 1914 season. Wyoming State Archives.

Custer Massacre.

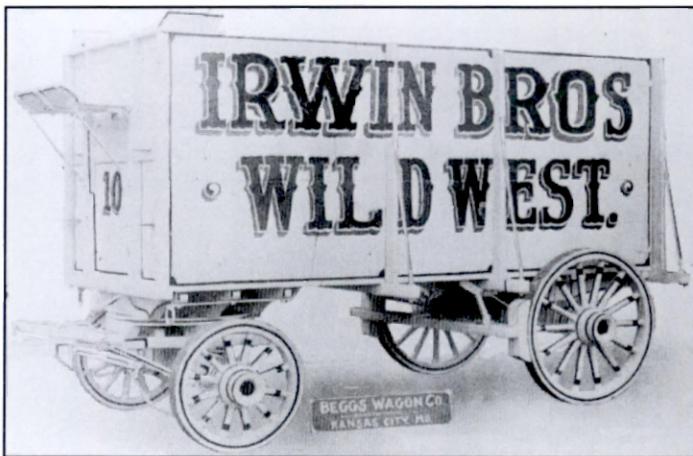
"Event No. 5. Fancy and expert shooting by Frank Miller, of Fort Collins, Colorado, and one the Champion Crack Shots of the World.

"Event No. 6. Pony express ridden by Montana Earl, Floyd Irwin and Scout Maish.

"Event No. 7. Stage coach hold-up coach driven by the original Deadwood stage coach driver, 'Spittin' Bill Davis.

"Event No. 8. Steer bulldogging headed by Scout Maish, Champion steer thrower of the world, winning

An Irwin Bros. baggage wagon built by the Beggs Wagon Company. Pfening Archives.



this title at Winnipeg, Canada, at the Stampede, assisted by other famous steer throwers.

"Event No. 9. Trick and fancy roping, headed by the champion trick roper of the world. Bee Ho Gray of Oklahoma, assisted by Floyd Irwin, Montana Earl, Hazel Moran, Roy Kivett Irwin, Kid Mex, Francis Irwin and others.

"Event No. 10. Race between cowgirl, cowboy and Sioux Indian ridden by Frances Irwin, Roy Kivett Irwin and Sioux Indian.

"Event No. 11. Cowgirl race, ridden by Joella Irwin, champion relay rider of the World; ex-champion Pauline Irwin, ex-champion Gladys Irwin.

"Event No. 12. Cowboy race, ridden by Bob Liegh, champion relay rider of the world and holder of world's record and others.

"Event No. 13. Indian race, ridden by Sioux Indians.

"Event No. 14. Trick and fancy riding, by all champions—Floyd Irwin, Scout Maish, Bee Ho Gray, Montana Earl, Roy Kivett Irwin, Arline Palmer and her troupe of Russian Cossacks.

"Event No. 15. Push ball game, between cowboys of the Y-6 Ranch and Sioux Indians.

"Event No. 16. Exhibition by Australian Jack Morrissey, champion whip cracker of the world and champion flat racing horse rider of Australia, won at Sidney, Australia, 1900. Also holds the foot jump record, jumping over a horse six feet two inches high.

"Event No. 17. Bucking horse exhibition by the champion rough riders of the world.

"Event No. 18. Floyd Irwin and his famous coal black Arabian stallions in liberty act.

"Event No. 19. Scenes of Forty-Nine. A picturesque scene of the old immigrant wagon crossing the plains, their camp and the attack by Indians, where men and horses fall as if in real battle."

At the end of the performing listing this note appeared, "Don't forget the Cheyenne Frontier Days Celebration, the

Father of them all, from which all others have been copied, given annually in Cheyenne for the last eighteen years, held this year August 18, 19, 20 and 21."

Sidney, Nebraska was played on June 17, followed by a fair in Alliance, Nebraska, June 18-20. The show then started a string of one day stands in Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and Utah. A short note in the July 11 *Billboard* said the show played Holdrege, Nebraska on June 27 and that the parade was pleasing to witness. A three day stand was played at Ft. Collins, Colorado on the way west. Four days were spent in Nevada before playing a fair in Colfax, California from July 19 to 21.

The August 8 *Billboard* reported: "San Francisco, July 26. The Irwin Bros. Cheyenne Frontier Days Wild West advertising car arrived at the Golden Gate a few days ago and got one of the best billings shown in the Exposition City in many moons. The show will spend two weeks around the bay cities before going to the Northwest. This is the first visit of the famous congress of the champion rough riders and ropers of the West to the coast.

"Paul Babbitt, the cowboy bill-poster, pulled out at Ogden. The others with the car are T. F. Ronney, manager; George Schilling, boss bill-poster; F. 'Shorty' Van Miller, Frank 'Spider Legs' Martin, Frank Mahery, D. C. Speicer, J. A. Smithee and C. A. More."

The August 14 *Billboard* reported: "The Irwin Bros. Wild West Show pulled into San Francisco on July 24, and a large crowd welcomed it at the opening performance, Saturday afternoon. Sunday many of the visitors were forced to sit on the straw. The native sons appreciated real wild west exhibitions, and were thoroughly satisfied.

"Among the features with the show this season are: Floyd Irwin, looping the neck of his horse from the saddle at full speed, as well as his six trained Arabian stallions; Bee Ho Gray, who throws three ropes at once making a catch with each; Frank Miller and Georgiana Knight, expert fancy and crackshot artists; Gene Nadreau, the Hebrew comedian, cowboy and vocalist; Charles Weedman,

OFFICIAL ROUTE CARD —OF THE—	
Irwin Bros. Real Wild West Show	
Season 1914	
Elko, Nevada,	July 13th
Winnemucca, Nevada,	July 14th
Lovelock, Nevada,	July 15th
Reno, Nevada,	July 16th
Enroute	July 17th
Colfax, California,	July 19th, 20th and 21st
Roseville, California,	July 22nd
Sacramento, California,	July 23rd
San Francisco, California,	July 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th and 29th
AL. FAIRBROTHER, Mail Superintendent/	

Route card issued by Irwin Bros. in 1914. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

comedian and juggler; Montana Earl, Hazel Maish, Roy Kivett, Kid and Francis Irwin.

"The program is made up of nineteen numbers, with every thing running like clock work.

"Roster: Executive staff—Charles B. and Frank Irwin, owners; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Irwin, managers; Mr. and Mrs. Frank L. Miner, treasurers; Hutton S. Rowe, general agent; George Dynan, superintendent; H. X. Bunce, press agent; Allen Nishwitz, big show announcer; Al Fairbrother, bandmaster; Bobbie Kane, side show manager; Gordon and Mann, concessions; Howard McMasters and H. Winters, ticket sellers; N. Rowell, lightman; Bill Baker, trainmaster; Shanty Coleman, boss canvasman; Curly Brown, boss hostler of baggage stock, Everett McGuckin, head steward, Eddie Cockeral, head chef; Floyd Irwin, arena director, trick rider and roper; Hugh Clark, chief of cowboys,

A group of performers in front of a Beggs stringer and pole wagon. American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

rider and roper; Joella Irwin, chief of cowgirls; Maxine Irwin, claimed to be the youngest cowgirl in the world; Robert Leigh, relay rider and boss hostler of arena stock; Dutch Phillips, bull and buffalo rider; Charles Irwin, Jr., trick rider; Frank Maish, steer thrower; Willie Lynn, relay rider; Charles Johnson, rider; 'Spitting Bill' Davis, stage coach driver; Frank Miller, crack and fancy shooting; Bee Ho Gray, trick roper; Gene Nadreau, Hebrew comedian and cowboy; Charles Weedman, eccentric comedy juggler; Mrs. Frank Irwin and Al Lewis, calliope players.

"Lady riders: Helen Bonham, relay rider; Georgiana Knight, crack shot; Eloise Fox, bucking horse rider; Pauline Irwin, relay rider; Gladys Irwin, relay ride; Frances Irwin, Myrtle Roberts, Eva McGuckin, Mable Phillips and Minnie Jones. Rough riders: Charlie Johnson, Paul Hastings, Leo Farrell. Bear Creek Kid, Montana Kid, Cheyenne Charlie, Ned Rowell, Doc Campbell, Diamond George, Bill Johnson, Tommy Douglas and Dan Lallie.

"Trick ropers: Bee Ho Gray, Floyd Irwin, Kid Mex, Roy Kivett, Montana Earl and Miss Tillie Gillis. Indians: Chief Henry Makes Enemy, Chief Chase in the Morning, and a band of Sioux Indians. Trick riders: Floyd Irwin, Bee Ho Gray, Montana Earl, Frank Maish. Jim Kennedy, H. Cheonia and troupe of Russian Cossacks.

"Side show: Bobby Kane's cannibals; Diavolo, fire eater; Sport Pusemba, fortune teller; Cleo Smith, memory wizard; Bobby Kane's Georgia minstrels; Dick Gordon and wife, snake charmer and knife throw-



er; Prof. Rozello, lecturer and magician."

The August 28 *Billboard* reported that the Irwin advertising car arrived at Salt Lake City on August 12 en route to Idaho Falls, Idaho; Portland, Oregon and the Northwest for fairs. The Irwin show would play Salt Lake City in October. George Dynan was now the general agent.

The show played the Wisconsin State Fair near Milwaukee early in September.

The Spokane, Washington fair was played September 14 to 19. A contract was signed on March 26 by Irwin Bros. Real Cheyenne Wild West Shows and the Spokane Interstate Fair. In part, the agreement read: "Irwin Bros. agree to put on an exhibit of their entire wild west shows equal or better in every respect to their shows put on in 1913, and as large as put on at Helena, Montana and Salt Lake City, Utah in 1914.

"It is understood that Irwin Bros. shall put on a parade each day through the city of Spokane at any hour designated by the Fair, same to consist of at least three-quarters of their livestock, and band, and put on five different acts each afternoon at hours to be designated by the Fair, same to consist of at least three-quarters of their livestock, and band, and put on five different acts each afternoon to be designated by the fair, and to furnish a cowgirls' relay race each afternoon, with at least four entries.

"It is further understood that the night performance will be substantially as follows: grand entry; introduction of champions; quadrille on horseback; Indian war dance; trick shooting; trick riding by five or more people; cowboy race one-half mile with at least four entries; race between cowboy, cowgirl and Indian; race one-half mile with at least four entries; trick roping by at least five people; straight roping by two or more people; bull dogging; bucking horse riding, at least 8 to be ridden each night; riding bucking bull,



Charlie Irwin driving a cart pulled by a buffalo team. Old West Museum collection.

bucking cow, bucking buffalo and bucking mule; several clown acts; stage coach hold-up; Scenes of '49, including attack on wagon train; and wild horse race, at least twenty-five wild horses to be furnished and at least eight ridden each night. The above program to be subject to the supervision of the fair.

"Irwin Bros. further agree to furnish all the livestock, people, help, feed, corrals and stabling necessary."

Jumbo window card used by Irwin Bros. It is printed in black, yellow and red. The Nelson Museum of the West.



sary for the production of this entire show, and to pay all freight, railway transportation and expense in connection therewith.

"Irwin Bros. further agree that they will not show within two hundred miles of Spokane before the date of this exhibition, and guarantee that no circuses or other shows will be permitted to bill any features as theirs.

"Irwin Bros. further agree that they will bring at least twenty car-loads of livestock and show paraphernalia to Spokane, including one hundred twenty-five head of live-stock and one hundred people.

"In consideration of the faithful performance of the above, the Fair agrees to pay to Irwin Bros. for said exhibition the sum of sixty-two hundred dollars, to be paid as follows: One thousand at the conclusion of each of the first five nights performance and twelve hundred dollars at the of the sixth night's performance; and further to pay Irwin Bros. all of the cash received from the night's gate and grandstand receipts in excess of fifteen thousand dollars, and up to twenty thousand dollars, and 50 percent of all cash gate and grandstand night receipts over twenty thousand dollars.

"The Fair further agrees to furnish light for the putting on of this exhibition."

The October 24 *Billboard* reported: "Previous to opening at the Utah State Fair, Salt Lake City, October 3, Irwin Bros. Wild West gave a special performance for the vaudeville artists playing the Orpheum, Empress and Pantages theaters at the time. Included in the audience was Will Rogers, the Oklahoma cowboy. To show their appreciation of the performance, they presented the Irwin brothers with a floral horse shoe that stood four feet, ten inches high.

"On the day of the opening of the fair a number of the vaudevillians joined in old show wagons, some on mules, and others on broncos in a parade, and they all had some good laughs on each other."

It is thought that the show closed following the Salt Lake City stand. Old Steamboat, the famous bucking horse, died there on October 16 after an injury while being unloaded from a stock car in Ogden, Utah in September. A new bucking horse named "I be Damn" replaced Steamboat.

The 1914 season was not a good one for wild west shows. The Young Buffalo and Kit Carson shows both were sold in bankruptcy during the year.

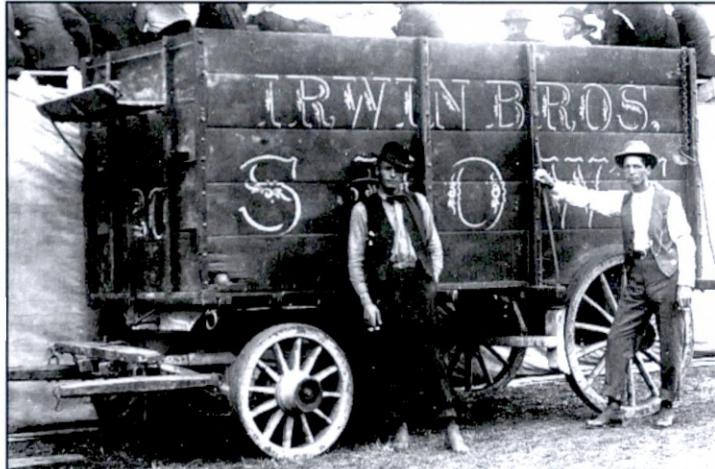
1915

Frank R. Irwin and Floyd Irwin were with the Sells-Floto Circus early in the 1915 season before the Irwin show opened in June. It was there that Floyd became smitten with Dee Dee Stumph, a beautiful aerialist who he later married.

The May 22 *Billboard* noted that Irwin Bros. would open on June 17-20 at Omaha, Nebraska. This may have been part of a short tour before returning for the Frontier Days celebration in Cheyenne.

The August 3, 1915 Wyoming State Tribune reported; "With the tune of Cheyenne played by the Irwin Bros. enlarged cowboy band, the special train conveying the Irwin Bros. wild west outfit left Cheyenne for its two months tour through six states at 11 o'clock this morning, having been delayed in the loading of the train and the arrival of various performers. Preceding the departure of the company, the band played on street corners for a half hour this morning.

"Among the world champions with the show are Harry Walters of Mulhall, Oklahoma, who won the titles in broncho busting and trick and fancy riding at the last Frontier Days celebration, who at the last moment was induced to leave the Barnum & Bailey circus and appear with the Irwins; George Wier of Monument, New Mexico, champion steer roper, who will join the outfit in Colorado; Be Ho Gray of Miles City, Montana, champion trick and fancy roper; Mrs. Frank Jones, who until two days ago was Miss Joella Irwin, champion woman relay rider, and



Most of the baggage wagons were titled Irwin Bros. Shows. Howard Tibbals collection.

others all of whom won their titles during Frontier Days.

"The states to be visited on the tour will be Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. The last engagement will be in Salt Lake City on October 6."

The August 3, 1915 *Leader* stated: "With the majority of the world champions crowned at the last Frontier Days celebration, the Irwin Bros. wild west outfit will leave Cheyenne tonight on a two month's tour which will take them through northern Colorado, western Utah, and western Wyoming. The Irwins have several contracts to appear at wild west celebrations, and while traveling from one wild west celebration to the other, they will pitch their tents at intermediate points for one night shows. The first stop to be made by this outfit will be at Greeley, where they will play tomorrow afternoon and night. The first celebration at which the Irwin Bros. will appear will be at Grand Junction."

The August 28, 1915 *Billboard* noted that the Irwin advance car arrived in Salt Lake City on August 12 en route to Idaho Falls, Idaho Portland, Oregon and other northwest fairs.

1916

The July 11, 1916 Cheyenne *Ledger* reported: "Pine Ridge, the thriving little farming city forty miles east of Cheyenne, is concluding a two-day celebration which is one of the most successful ever held in the

'dry farming' district. Irwin Bros. Wild West show is the chief attraction, and is presenting what undoubtedly is the best program of wild west events ever put on by a traveling show. At yesterday's afternoon show more than 1,500 persons were present and today the crowd is greater, many more persons having come to town from the surrounding county and from Cheyenne. Last evening a big dance was held in the Irwin side show tent with hundreds of people attending.

"The Frontier Days committee motored to Pine Bluffs yesterday afternoon to attend the Irwin show and to 'bill' intermediate towns with Frontier Days advertising. The committee was greatly pleased with the fine program presented by the Irwin company and with the gracious hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Irwin, who entertained them at supper in the show's 'chuck' tent.

"The Irwin show as presented at Pine Bluffs is Frontier Days in miniature. Features of the program were a quadrille on horseback by cowboys and cowgirls; Indian war dances by Chief Little Bull and his band of Sioux; Floyd Irwin and his remarkable performing horses; Jack Morrissey, Australian whip cracker; races by cowboys, cowgirls and Indians; broncho busting and the riding of bucking bulls, steers, burros and buffaloes; steer bulldogging; relay racing, Roman racing, wild horse racing, chariot racing, a chuck wagon race; an attack on a Deadwood stage. A pleasing, novel and spectacular feature was the Scenes of '49,' which presented a realistic panorama of the settlement and development of the west.

"The Irwin show leaves Pine Bluffs tonight for an eastern tour, including an engagement at New York, where the show will supply the chief features of the big Round-Up celebration which is to be held at Sheephead Bay. Few Cheyenne people realize the magnitude of the Irwin shows. Thirty-one cars are required to transport the company

and equipment of the show. The company includes 135 persons, among them being some of the most famous of wild western performers. There are 120 head of special show stock, 140 head of wild west horses, 120 head of wild steers and 60 Indians."

This boastful article appears to have the touch of a press agent. The report indicates that the 1916 show was the largest in the history of the Irwin organization.

The Cheyenne *Ledger* of July 28, 1916 reported: "Jim Kennedy, a cowboy with Irwin Bros., was fatally injured when he fell between two horses while riding a Roman race during a performance at the Douglas county fair grounds in Omaha, Nebraska."

In August Irwin contracted to supply livestock and riders for a large rodeo in New York City called the New York Stampede. He did not promote or produce the engagement, but was a contract supplier to Guy Weadick, the producer. Irwin brought a large number of horses and probably stabling tents, corrals and various equipment. A few flat cars may have been used to carry the wagons for the equipment, but it is doubtful that tents and seats were taken to New York.

The *Billboard* went wild covering the New York Stampede for a month. The August 12 issue was headed by a page three article: "Guy Weadick's Stampede goes over mightily in the big city.

"August 5 dawned dark and threatening. As late as 11 in the morning in Manhattan, the sky was overcast and the clouds spat drizzle every now and then. And yet the vast grandstand at the Sheepshead Speedway, probably the largest in America if not in the whole world, was seemingly packed as early as 2 p.m., and a big stand of bleachers, specially built for the occasion was comfortably filled.

"The contests started at 2:30 and, with hardly a single exception, held the huge array of spectators spellbound, breathless and dumbfounded until twenty minutes of seven, when the wild horse race, the number that closed the first afternoon's contests, was pulled off.



A group of Irwin Bros. rail cars are pictured in the background of this photo. Old West Museum.

"There were waits and hitches in plenty, but Weadick always got things going before impatience became marked."

The *New York Times* in its issue of Sunday, August 6, gave almost an entire column of highly eulogistic content, saying, among other things: "New York may have thought it knew something about the cowboy, but no one, unless he was one of the 15,000 or so people who were at the Sheepshead Bay Speedway yesterday afternoon to see the Stampede, is entitled to think so any more. Where the wild west shows and the movies stop the Stampede begins."

The August 19 *Billboard* stated: "Weadick wins. The Stampede winds up in a blaze of glory.

"Despite it all it was a success d'estime. A wad of money was lost for the backers, which is variously estimated at between \$100,000 and \$200,000. Nor was Weadick to blame in any particular. He gave them the biggest, best and most varied contest ever pulled off and more of it than the contract stipulated.

"The backers could have and should have saved the mess of garnishees, liens and attachments that marred the finish.

"And, by the way, Charlie Irwin did praiseworthy deeds of showmanship too numerous to relate where space is so limited. The part he played throughout the whole event deserves the fullest and sincerest credit. He is a mighty name, mighty throughout the wild west world, and one that is becoming increasingly mightier year by year."

The same issue contained eleven pages of advertising by people who had participated in the Stampede.

The August 23, 1916 Cheyenne

Ledger reported: "E. W Stone, cashier of the Citizens National Bank, returned yesterday from New York City where he was with Charles Irwin at the Sheeps-head Bay stampede.

"While the show was mismanaged and the lack of attendance caused the producers to run far behind, Irwin and 150 people will come out to the good unless unforeseen things hinder the arrangements that were being made when I left New York," Stone said. Many of the wealthy men who were backing the show have arranged to pay off all the contestants out of their own pockets and Irwin himself is helping the cause by staging a benefit wild west performance each afternoon this week."

"The failure of the Stampede to draw crowds was assigned numerous reasons, the most important reason being the people of New York were not greatly interested. The infantile paralysis quarantine, which is right in New York, the street car strike, rain and the staging of major league baseball games in New York during the same week were other reasons assigned for the lack of attendance. Only once during the shows, this being the last day when 50,000 people attended the stampede, was the attendance large enough to be hopeful. The average attendance was not over 15,000 to 20,000.

"Irwin's earnings, jointly coming from prize money won and his original contract price, will be in the neighborhood of \$40,000. He had the people and more than 550 head of cattle and horses. His people were paid a straight salary and were given half of their prize money earnings.

"It was reported that one of the cashiers absconded with the gate receipts for a certain period, which placed the stampede in the embarrassing position it now faces.

"Irwin is staging benefits in New York this week on a flat payment of \$1,000 per day, the proceeds over and above expenses going to the stampede company to pay what they owe the constants."

In his 1952 book, *My 50 Years in Rodeo*, announcer Fog Horn Clancy told of the 1916 rodeo season and his

association with Charles Irwin: "In 1916 I was engaged by T. Joe Cahill, secretary of the great Cheyenne Frontier Days, to do the announcing. In those days the cowboys did not carry their horses in trailers hitched to the backs of their cars as they do now. The ropers and bulldoggers, who had mounts of their own, would band together to buy a certain number of railroad tickets so they could take their horses in a baggage or horse car.

"I was a little awed by the size of the arena and the grandstand at the Cheyenne Frontier Days show. It was considered the biggest and most important rodeo in America and I was anxious to make good.

"Charlie Irwin was the arena director. He was one of the big men in the early days of rodeo--big in stature and big in deeds. He furnished the stock and handled many of the biggest rodeos in the country during the first three decades of this century. He was the owner of the first bucking horse ever to gain an international reputation. The horse 'Steamboat,' was unrideable by the best in the business for years.

"There was no ten-second time limit as there is today. Even in Cheyenne, in 1916, they were still earring down or snubbing the horse in the arena, the judges allowing the ride to go on as long as they thought fit. Steamboat had passed out of the picture several years before this, but was still remembered and talked about.

"Immediately after Cheyenne, I was booked for my next engagement at the New York Stampede to be held at Sheepshead Bay Speedway in Brooklyn.

"Guy Weadick, rodeo promoter and producer, had arranged to put the rodeo in New York and had advertised it far and wide. Called the Stampede, the show was to run twelve days. That was at least eight days longer than any of the rodeos in the West ran at that time.

"One of the events that Weadick had programmed was a wild horse race, Charlie Irwin had shipped in about a hundred wild horses to be used in this event. They were just broom-tails, worth about five dollars a head out on the range. Wild horses are different from outlaw buckers,

whose ambition is always to kill the riders.

"After the Stampede was over, these wild horses were left on Irwin's hands and were hardly worth shipping back West. So he decided to sell them for whatever he could get. He made arrangements with an auction firm in New York to advertise the sale and auction them off at the Speedway.

"The advertisements brought out quite a crowd of hucksters and others who peddled their wares from a horse-drawn wagon, or had need for horses for trucking purposes.

"The auctioneer would yell, 'Horse in halter' and would proceed to sell the animal to the highest bidder.

"These fellows buying the horses never had an experience with wild horses and didn't know what they were getting into. They bid them at anywhere from twenty to sixty dollars according to the size and looks of the horse, and when they were sold they were turned into another pen to wait the end of the sale, when each purchaser was to pick out his horse and take him home.

"There never was another show like that one. I laughed until my sides ached when those fellows started

Charles B. Irwin around 1916. Old West Museum collection.



ed to take their horses home. Here would go a horse with a huckster hanging on to the lead rope and being dragged across the lot at sixty miles an hour. (Irwin's cowboys rounded up the wild horses at five dollars a clip, thus selling the horses back to the new owners a second time.)

"After the close of the Stampede a number of the rodeo folks, including myself, went with Charlie Irwin to Kansas City for the roundup there where Irwin was to furnish the stock and special features.

"Irwin had his own special train and owned his own horse cars and Pullmans. It was a regular circus train and afforded an excellent opportunity for those cowboys and cowgirls who were short on funds to get back as far west as Kansas City.

"Thus, Irwin always had a great group of cowboys and cowgirls with him and he would help them out by playing as a wild west show--that is just exhibitions, without prizes or he would arrange with some local businessmen to post prizes and conduct a rodeo. Then he would furnish the stock and specialty acts and most of the contestants. Those who traveled with him naturally entered the contests, and since he had some of the best riders in the rodeo field with him, they usually won their share of the prize money.

"On the way to Kansas City, we stopped for a three day's show at Pittsburgh, at the old Federal League ballpark. Irwin had sent an agent on ahead to make the arrangements and do the advertising.

"When it came time for the big parade, Charlie yelled for everybody to get mounted and grab a banner or pennant. I jumped on a horse and rode up to where Floyd Irwin, Charlie's son, was issuing the flags. He pitched one to me. I grabbed it and rode into the parade without looking at it.

"As we lined down the street I began to be conscious of the unusual amount of attention I was attracting. People were looking at me and pointing. I then looked at the pennant and saw it read: 'World's Champion Bronc Rider.' I wasn't, but I liked carrying it anyway.

"The show did a fair business at Pittsburgh--fair enough to put in a break-jump stop.

"While in Dewey, I got a call from C. B. Irwin, 'Fog Horn,' he said. 'I want you to come out here to Cedar Rapids and go to work. I am organizing a rodeo in Iowa.'

"I hadn't worked for C. B. since 1916 and as he was one of the biggest producers in the country at the time, I was glad to be associated with him again.

Irwin weighed near three hundred pounds and was noted as a big eater. Any doubts I might have had about this were settled for me that night. We had a committee meeting a couple of weeks before the opening of the show which broke up just about dinner time. C. B. invited the chairman to come down to the hotel with us to have dinner.

"Why, thanks, I'd be glad to," the chairman said. "But I've got to go by my office for a few minutes. Why don't you two go on down town and order dinner and I'll come right along and join you."

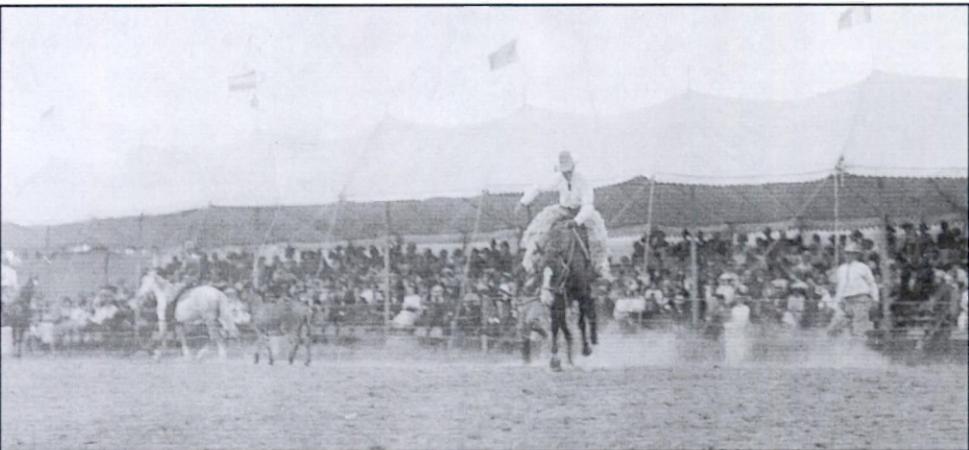
"So we went back to Irwin's room and he called the room service and ordered three big steak dinners with all the trimmings. The waiters were just bringing these dinners into the room when the phone rang. It was the chairman of the committee.

"Mr. Irwin," he said, "I'm awfully sorry, but some very important business has come up and I can't get away to have dinner with you. Please excuse me."

Irwin hung up the phone and turned to me. 'Fog Horn,' he said, 'there's only two of us now to eat three dinners, but I don't know of any other two men in the country more capable of taking on the job.'

I fancied myself as something of a hearty diner, but one of those massive dinners was all I could dispose. C. B. had no trouble in handling the other.

Irwin was a great rodeo promoter and producer, a forceful, engaging man. He was a Wyoming rancher who knew cattle, horses and cowboys. He maintained a traveling rodeo, much like a modern circus,



with lots of stock and a force of top-notch cowboys and cowgirls. He would play as a wild west show one week, paying his cowboys and cowgirls a salary. The next week he might be producing a contest rodeo. He ran a fast program and all his contract performers or specialty acts had to be ready to go on with their act at a moment's notice. He seldom followed the routine of the printed program, so event number eighteen might be put on as event number three, but there was something going on all the time.

Some of the regular rodeo contestants who did not work for Irwin, claimed that he always saw to it that his own people won most of the prizes. I can't say about that, for the truth is that he always had a lot of top hands with him and it was natural for some of them to win at every contest."

Shortly before the 1917 Cheyenne Frontier Days Floyd Irwin announced he would retire from rodeo activities following that year's celebration, but he never got the chance. The *Ledger* reported why: "Irwin, the only son of Charlie Irwin, was one of the show's most popular figures, boy and man, of scores of wild west celebrations held during recent years. Strong, generous, kindly, wholesome, he was known and admired from one end of the western range states, and his death from accident occurred while he was practicing for the Frontier Days celebration, dampened the zest for perilous sport of the hundreds of ropers and riders who are here for the week's cowboy carnival.

Irwin was fatally injured at Frontier Park last Thursday evening

Inside the Irwin Bros. arena.
American Heritage Center, University
of Wyoming.

[July 19th] while playfully roping a steer which had strayed from its companions while being trained to dash across the arena. He cast his lariat and, believing he had failed to loop the steer, turned his horse into a course opposite to that of the bovine. His rope, however, had looped over one of the steer's legs and when the slack was taken up the jar caused Irwin's horse to throw back his head with great force. The horse's head struck that of the rider and the latter sustained a fractured skull. He died the following day at age 32."

Following the death of his son, Charles Irwin disbanded his wild west show, but continued to contract contest rodeos. The wild west show wagons and equipment were stored at Four-Mile pasture on his ranch, never to be used again. No information is available about the disposal of the Irwin rail cars, wagons and tents following the 1917 season. The only Irwin show property known to survive is a corner statue from the former Lemon tableau. It is in the Old West Museum in Cheyenne's Frontier Park.

Irwin's last engagement was at the Calgary Stampede in 1919. During the summer of 1919 a special train arrived in Cheyenne carrying a cast and crew from Hollywood. Irwin's old friend Fred Stone was featured in the film that was photographed on the Irwin ranch and at the Frontier Days celebration. Stone and the camera man were guests at the Irwin's ranch house. The movie crew was bedded down in the cowboys bunk house, rel-

egating them to the horse barns. All of the stock used in the film, *The Great Southwest*, was owned by Irwin.

By the early 1920s Charlie left brother Will to manage the twenty-three thousand acre ranch. Irwin had cleverly bought parcels of land that boxed in other parcels. This allowed him to use that land as if it was his.

With the day to day operation of the ranch in his brother's hands, he was free to concentrate on his interest in fine race horses, building a large stable. He became well known in racing circles.

Irwin found the race track in Tijuana, Mexico to be ideal for winter racing. He and his wife stayed in nearby San Diego. He bought a ranch in San Ysidro, California, where he settled in. Will Rogers was a frequent visitor, as was his new friend Douglas Fairbanks and his wife Mary Pickford. The Irwins were guests at Pickfair, Fairbanks' estate in the Hollywood hills, staying in the room used by Charlie Chaplin during his frequent visits.

By 1923 Irwin had transferred ownership of his horses to a corporation using the old Irwin Livestock and Show Company name. The race horse business was very good to him with 147 winning horses that year.

He returned to Cheyenne each summer and led the Frontier Days parade each year. His continued interest and involvement in the yearly celebration led to new safety standards that brought more humane treatment to the horses used in the events.

Charles B. Irwin died on March 23, 1934 from injuries received in an automobile accident. The March 24 Cheyenne *Ledger* wrote: "Death that came at noon Friday claimed Charles B. Irwin, Cheyenne rancher, race horse owner, showman and one of the best known private citizens of Wyoming. Injuries suffered in an automobile accident north of Cheyenne on the Torrington Road Wednesday morning caused his death. Irwin was riding in an automobile driven by his son-in-law, Claude Sawyer when a tire blowout caused the machine to leap from the



Floyd Irwin, son of Charles B. Irwin.
Pfening Archives.

road. Irwin was caught between the seat of the coupe and the dashboard. He suffered broken ribs and internal injuries. He was 58 years old.

"Mrs. Irwin, a daughter Mrs. Pauline Sawyer and Mrs. Frank Miner, a sister of Colorado Springs were with him when he died.

"Sawyer, who was also injured in the accident, is still in a serious condition at Memorial Hospital.

"It was about the time he organized his wild west show that his weight began to increase at a terrific rate and at the time of his death he was reputed to weigh more than 600 pounds.

"Irwin's fortunes varied throughout his life. At times he rode the crest of the financial wave, at other times he found it difficult to meet the feed bill for his livestock. When he was 'up' there was no man more generous with his worldly goods.

"He acquired large ranch holdings and the Irwin brothers' Y-6 brand became known in all parts of the country through its association with the wild west show.

"Color' perhaps dominated his personality. When he rode a horse in front of a packed grandstand he could send a crowd into a frenzy of cheers by simply waving his hat."

The *Wyoming Tribune* of March 25 noted: "Charles Irwin's body will lie in state from 11 a. m. until the hour of his funeral at the junior high school auditorium. A guard of honor

will be provided by the Elks to the Cheyenne Lodge No. 660, B. P. O. E.

"Members of the Cheyenne Frontier Days committee will attend the services in a body.

"Eight cowboys or former cowboys who were close friends of Irwin for years were selected as pallbearers. General John J. Pershing, Carl R. Gray, president of the Union Pacific railroad, and Will Rogers were among the honorary pallbearers."

In 1975 Irwin was inducted in the Rodeo Hall of Fame. In 1976 he was elected to the National Rodeo Hall of Fame. The July 25, 1976 Wyoming *State Tribune* noted: "Irwin was recognized by his peers as having influenced the course of rodeo more than any other man. Irwin is given much of the credit for rodeo's phenomenal growth in popularity during the time he was king-pin of the business.

"At once a showman, rancher, railroad agent and horseman, during his lifetime C. B. rose to considerable affluence and was one of the West's most powerful men. Numbering among his friends were such personages as presidents William Howard Taft and Teddy Roosevelt, for whom he named one of his best bucking horses; General John J. Pershing; Sioux Chief Red Cloud; Will Rogers and Douglas Fairbanks.

Frank R. Irwin died on January 4, 1959. William H. Irwin died on November 27, 1942.

While researching this article in the Cheyenne area the following were most helpful: Daniel Davis, photo archivist at the American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie; John Gavin, archivist of the Old West Museum, Cheyenne and the staff of the Wyoming State Archives, Cheyenne. Other material came from the Circus World Museum and Sylvester Braun.

For those wishing to learn more about Charles B. Irwin we suggest the book *Prairie*, a fictionalized account of his life by Anna Lee Waldo, published by Berkley Books in 1986. The book is in most libraries.

Wiziarde Novelty CIRCUS

SEASONS OF 1936-1937

By Joseph T. Bradbury

Throughout the history of the American circus are numerous examples of circus performers owning and operating their own shows and using their names in the titles. Leading the list is the great nineteenth century clown Dan Rice. In the twentieth century we find famous bareback riding families, the Davenports, Cristianis, and Hannefords, fielding their own circuses, the latter of which is in operation at this writing. The high wire Wallendas had a show, and wild animal trainers Clyde Beatty, Terrell Jacobs, Allen King and Eddie Kuhn took out troupes. Tom Mix, Buck Jones, Ken Maynard, Buck Owens, Jack Hoxie and Tim McCoy all had their own circuses or wild west shows.

Not so well known was the Wiziarde family, versatile performers on the low wire, aerial trapeze, pole and ladder perch, trampoline and teeterboard. They operated a small under canvas circus in 1936 and 1937.

John O. (Jack) Wiziarde and his wife Lou began performing in the early 1900s. Nothing has been found giving the date or place of birth of either, but by the mid teens they were based in Westmoreland, Kansas, which remained their home as long as they were active in show business.

Joining the Wiziardes was Buck Weir, who was often

billed as Buck Wiziarde and was a member of the Wiziarde Trio.

A four page letterhead-brochure dated c-1917 in the Circus World Museum files gives considerable information about the early years of the Wiziardes. The first page pictures three members of the Wiziarde Trio, presumed to be Jack, Lou and Buck Weir. The wording reads, "Free Acts for any Out of Door Celebration. Flying Trapeze Act, Trio Tight Wire Act, Balancing Ladder Perch Act."

Other pages picture of wire walkers performing a variety of stunts. The text reads: "Wiziarde Trio, Runners, Trampoline and Teeterboard Jumpers. Marvelous Running Rope Jumping, Splits, Perritts, Passes, Carrying, Cake Walking, Jumping Over Table. In and out of

Barrel, Wheelbarrow, all on the tight wire. Somersaults from Trampoline and Sensational Jump to Wire from Teeterboard combined with plenty of good clean comedy falls and bumps. Act is elegantly costumed and executed with speed and grace. A beautiful act for out of doors."



Jack Wiziarde in a 1940 photo. Circus World Museum collection

The Wiziarde Novelty Troupe In Their Tight-Wire Act



At Hitchcock County Fair, Culbertson, Aug. 11-14

Newspaper ad used by Wiziarde in 1931 in Culbertson, Nebraska. Joe Fleming collection.

Other drawings show the Wiziarde Duo Sensational Breakaway Ladder Perch Artists. and Astonishing Feats of Balancing on Slender Poles. The text states, "Is full of style presented in white sailor costumes. Owing to the many novel feats performed makes it a very exceptional attraction for out-of-door celebrations."

Another page has a photo of Jack Wiziarde, Peerless Gymnast, and a drawing of a frame-mounted trapeze with several stunts being performed including heel catch, one leg catch, chair and foot balancing. The text reads: "Latest up-to-date tricks on the Flying Balancing Trapeze. Wardrobe and apparatus the very best. Wardrobe changed complete each day. This act is full of style and action pleasing to all."

The letterhead further states: "These acts appeared with the Barnum & Bailey Circus 1912 and 1913; The Danny Robinson Circus in 1911; The Sells & Floto Circus 1910; The Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus 1909;

JACK O. WIZIARDE
PRESENTS
THE
Wiziarde Novelty Circus

FREE ATTRACTIONS
TWELVE ACTS :: FIFTEEN CLOWN NUMBERS
DAY AND NIGHT SHOW

FOR PARKS, FAIRS, PICNICS, IN OR OUTDOOR CELEBRATIONS
Lou Wiziarde, Sec.-Treas.
Secretary Commercial Clubs: **GET OUR TRADES DAY PLAN.**
We Carry Special Scenery, Spot and Flood Lights For Night Shows.
New Calliope Loud Speaker System Plays Programs Complete,




Letterhead used by Wiziarde in 1936. It is printed in black on green paper. Pfening Archives.

John Robinson 10 Big Shows 1906-07-08.

"We have played for the following vaudeville circuits, followed by a listing of some eight outfits with address and name of manager." Included was the Marcus Loew Circuit, one of the largest in the country.

Finally there is a group of testimonials from various secretaries of fairs and celebrations in Kansas and Iowa with the heading, "What some of the secretaries have to say about our show." A final positive testimonial is from the cashier of The Farmers State Bank in Westmoreland, Kansas.

The Wiziarde acts are not listed in programs at the Circus World Museum, however; they were mentioned in *Billboard* reviews.

The April 29, 1911 *Billboard* reviewed the Sun Bros. Shows opening at Macon, Georgia on April 16 and among the performers was the Wiziarde Troupe. Evidently the Wiziardes were with Sun Bros. only a couple of weeks as the May 13, 1911 *Billboard*, reporting the Nashville opening May 1 of Dan Robinson's Famous Shows, listed Jack and Buck Wiziarde in a perch act and among other tight wire numbers, the Wiziarde Troupe.

The May 3, 1913 *Billboard* covered the Perry, Iowa opening of Fred Buchanan's Yankee Robinson Shows on April 24 which noted the Wiziarde Trio among the aerial and balancing acts.

The April 7, 1917 *Billboard*

reviewed of J. A. Jones' Cole Bros. Circus at San Jose, California on March 28. There were 24 displays in the program and the Wiziardes were in three numbers, performing a perch act, balancing traps, and a tight wire number.

In time two more sons joined the family troupe, Frank, and Jack Jr. The Wiziardes continued through the



The marquee and big top in 1936. Circus World Museum collection.

1920s, no doubt appearing in some circus performances but for sure as free acts at fairs and celebrations, trade shows, and on the vaudeville stage. In late 1929 Jack Wiziarde began planning a circus. He tells about this in a December 25, 1929 letter to a Ray Hocum. The title was

The Wiziarde Novelty Show. Other wording read "A Complete Six Act Show. Clean, Clever, Classy, Up to Date. All New Wardrobe and Properties" Lou Wiziarde was listed as Secretary-Treasurer. One line read, "Free acts for Inside or outside celebrations. Permanent Address, Box 333, Westmoreland, Kansas."

The letter reads: "Dear Sir. Your letter 21st just received.

Inclosed find check for \$15. Please ship ladders by express to me, Westmoreland, Kansas via Baline, Kansas. In looking over your list can't use anything else. However, if you know anyone there that might have small net or swinging ladder let them know and have them write me here. We are framing a 7 act circus unit for fairs. Past year was good.

Thanking you for your letter with best wishes to you I am very respectfully, Jack O. Wiziarde."

A photo of the air calliope with show personnel in front appeared in the December 6, 1930 *Billboard*. The cutline read, "Members of the Wiziarde Novelty Circus Unit and one of the several trucks used in making

movements. The photograph was taken at the Benleman, Nebraska fair recently. Left to right: Jack O. Wiziarde, owner; Buck Weir; Mrs. Jack Wiziarde; Frank Wiziarde; Jack Wiziarde Jr.; Joe Coyle (Koko the Klown); Mamie Scott; Mrs. Rockett; and Mr. Rockett."

This photo appeared in the December 6, 1930 *Billboard*.



This ad was in the September 3, 1932 *Billboard*: "Jack O. Wiziarde presents the Wiziarde Novelty Circus and scenes from the Life History of George Washington. 10 acts, 15 clown numbers. Buffalo County Fair, Kearney, Nebraska, August 30-31, September 1-2. Return Date."

In addition to the outdoor dates the show played an indoor route, according to the Isaac Marcks files, for 10 weeks in early 1934. Clarence Auskins was general agent. Known dates were Great Bend, Kansas, December 31, 1933-January 5, 1934; January 21 to 23, Memphis, Tennessee (Ritz Theater); January 25-28, Hollis, Oklahoma; and January 29-31, Lawton, Oklahoma.

The show continued to play its regular route of multi-date fair engagements in 1935 but the format which had been in place since 1930 soon changed.

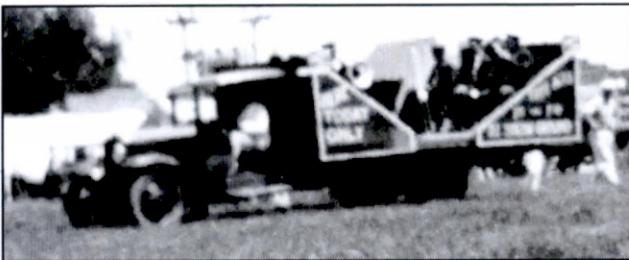
1936

In the early months of 1936 Jack Wiziarde and his family began to convert the show into a full fledged canvas outfit making daily stands. By 1936 standards the finished product was a small to medium sized motorized circus. Nothing appeared about it in the *Billboard* until after the May opening, but thanks to Orin King, who researched the local Westmoreland, Kansas, newspapers, we have the story of the newly enlarged Wiziarde show.

The May 23, 1936 Westmoreland *Recorder* stated. "Jack Wiziarde enlarged Circus. Opens the Show at Westmoreland on Saturday, May 23.

"Things are humming around the winter quarters in Westmoreland of the Wiziardes. The fact is that the circus has grown so big that people of Westmoreland would never recognize it as the show that has become well known over Kansas and parts of adjoining states.

"Jack Wiziarde, manager of the circus, will put on his program opening the show season at Westmoreland on May 23. The show this year will be under a big tent with all the trimmings that circus fans like. Most of the old members of the show that



The bandwagon in Washington, Kansas on June 13, 1936. Circus World Museum collection.

gave the Novelty Circus a high standing among its competitors are still with it, but there also are many new acts and new features that will add greatly to the value of the show.

"The acts for this season include the Wiziarde family's big tight wire act; the five Cordts sisters in novelty acts; a troupe of trained ponies bought of Dutch Filly Grutzmacher, also troupe of wonderful pigeons, all trained by Sidney Rink, noted trainer from Al G. Barnes show. [In his old age Sidney Rink, a very successful elephant trainer, had digressed to this tiny show.]

"Frank Wiziarde and his gang in special concert numbers; Prof. Brown's snappy band and Jack Wiziarde, Jr. in a new surprise act.

"The clowns have real laughs for those who attend the circus. They include Jack Shafer, King of Clowns.

"Mrs. Jack Wiziarde, who has been sick, has about recovered and will be on hand when show season opens to do her parts.

"The show will be carried from place to place during the season on seven trucks and trailers. It carries

Newspaper ad for the opening stand in 1936. Kansas State Historical Society.

COMING!

The WIZIARDE Novelty

TWO-RING

CIRCUS

BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER
UNDER THE BIG TENT

SATURDAY, MAY 23rd

2 and 8 P.M. RAIN OR SHINE

with it its own dining tent and light plant.

"Ole Olson and Clark Estes have done the blacksmithing work and John J. Lee, all of Westmoreland, have built bodies on trailers.

"Come and look show over anytime in Westmoreland before show season opens.

"Attend the opening, May 23, afternoon and evening."

The first news of the show came in the May 30, 1936 *Billboard* in the "Under The Marquee" section. It noted that Billy Brown was directing the band and Bob Thrasher was playing the calliope with the band. The same issue had this want advertisement: "Bass and cornet for Wiziarde Circus. Wire Billy Brown, band-leader, Westmoreland, Kansas."

After the season's opening the show moved to Frankfort, Kansas for performances on Monday, May 25, and remained in its home state for several weeks. Next came Seneca, Centralia and Guff. On June 1 the show played Holton, followed by Mayetta and Rossville.

At St. Mary's on June 5, a *Billboard* correspondent caught up with the show and filed a very complete report in the June 21 issue: "The Wiziarde Novelty Circus opened at Westmoreland, Kansas, May 23 in a downpour and the lot was flooded. Everybody lent a hand and the show made Frankfort on time to turn away business. A bad storm at Holton cut business. The pit show has been doing okay. Show moves on nine show owned trucks. Lyndon, Kansas has been booked for July 4.

"The program in order. Entry, with pigeon finish. Baldwin Duo, comedy globe; pony drill in rings; clown number; trained Spitz dogs; Marjorie and Cathrene Cordts on Roman ladder; Miss Perion and Sidney Rink on dancing horses; clown basket horses; Jack O. Wiziarde on balancing traps; clowns; concert announcement,

"Frank (Wiziarde) and his gang; three Cordts Sisters, aero number; Ralph Kirk and his mule, Mae West; second concert announcement; clown entry;

Travelair the rhumba horse; clowns; four Cordts Sisters, on stage; trained camels; Wiziarde Family on high tight wire; clown gag; football horses and bucking mules.

"The Personnel. Band, Billy Brown, leader and trombone; Ray E. Lee, trumpet; Bob Thrasher, calliope; George Nickum, baritone; Richard Nickum, drums; Buzz Holtman, bass; Herman Miller, trumpet.

"Canvas. Charley Parker, boss; Russell R. Quinn, George Spicer, Bill Evins, Gail Simon, Herold D. Nickum.

"Props. Ed Murry, boss; Spicer, Frank Kirk.

"Cookhouse. Mrs. Charley Parker, chef; Mrs. Nickum, Mrs. Kirk, Bill Evins.

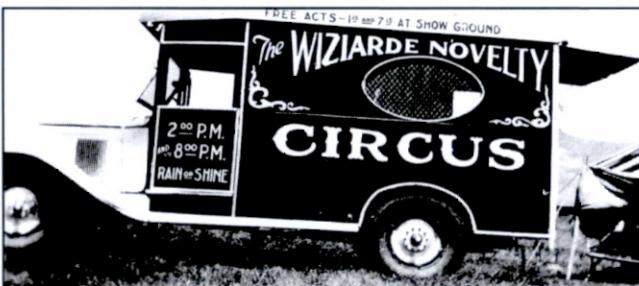
"Performers. Mr. and Mrs. Jack O., Jack Jr., and Frank Wiziarde; Sidney Rink, Vivian Perin, Ralph O'Dell, Mrs. Walter, Annabel, Margery, Kathryn, Jean, and June Cordts, Ralph Kirk.

"The Staff. Jack O. Wiziarde, manager; Mrs. Wiziarde, secretary-treasurer; advance, Clarence Auskings; tickets, Mrs. Wiziarde; front door, Irma Nickum; merchants tickets, Grace Brown; reserves, Mrs. Ralph Kirk; concert, Frank Wiziarde."

After St. Mary's the show played two dayers at Wamega and Alma and one dayers at White City, Barnes, Hanover, and on June 13 it was at Washington, where Bill Green photographed the show. Green's 1936 photos are the only ones to turn up.

His collection is now at the Circus World Museum and includes a lithograph and a herald from Wiziarde.

From the Green photos we note the big top had three center poles and was about a 60 with two 30s, with a small marquee. There is another small tent pictured on one side of



The air calliope truck in 1936. Circus World Museum collection.

the big top plus another with stripped canvas which is obviously the cookhouse. Although the *Billboard* mentioned a pit show, none is seen in the Green pictures. Several of the reported nine vehicles are shown, including the air calliope as well as the band truck used for downtown bally, a rather long straight unit with an open chariot type body. A closed semi with windows probably transported the ponies, horses, and mule listed in the performance.

The herald used in Washington stand read: "Coming. One Day Only. The Wiziarde Novelty Circus and Trained Animal Show. Loud Speaker System. Listen for the Calliope. Amazing Array of Artists. From the Saw Dust Ring Clowns, Gymnasts, Wire Walkers.

"Free Attraction Given Twice Daily on Show Grounds. 1.30 and 7.30 p.m.

"Don't Fail to See The Wiziarde Novelty Circus." A photo of the air calliope truck and the personnel in front was pictured, the same one published in the 1930 *Billboard*.

There has been no detailed description of the big top interior but probably there was one standard ring and a platform stage.

The Wiziarde backyard and big top in 1936. Circus World Museum collection.



Based on the route in the Issac Marcks files the show continued in Kansas, with stands at Elba, Scandia, Clyde, Delphos, Glasco, Miltonvale, Chapman, Riley, Wakefield, Enterprise, and a two day engagement at Lyndon, July 4 and 5.

Another two dayer was at Pleasanton, July 23-24, and three dayers were played at Humboldt, July 13-15; Blue Mound, July 19-21, and Osawatomie, July 26-28. The show was at Paola, former home of the James Patterson circuses and carnivals, July 30, and, according to the Marcks routes, played Osawatomie again on July 31, however; this possibly is a mistake.

Marcks' August route is not complete. The month began with a one day stands at Melvern and Williamsburg, then two days at Osage City, Lebo, and Council Grove, three days in Florence, another one dayer at Cottonwood Falls, August 12, two days at Great Bend and a single day at Onega on August 15. The Marcks route ends with a final notation that the show closed November 4 at Westmoreland. It noted the show played some fairs, but no dates or locations were given. A winter indoor route began in December and continued into 1937.

The January 23, 1937 *Billboard* reported that the show played in South Dakota and Wyoming for six weeks with its animal unit to only fair business. It was then in Colorado where it remained until spring.

Nothing further has been learned about this animal unit. The show on its regular canvas tour in 1936 had enough animals to form a program using the dogs, goats, ponies, mule, and pigeons. There is no record of the show having an elephant.

1937

A new title was being used by the time this report was published in the June 12, 1937 *Billboard*: "Jack O. Wiziarde of the Wiziarde European Circus returned to Westmoreland, Kansas May 23 from a profitable trip through Colorado, furnishing acts at Brush Auto Show and the Elks Show at Ft. Morgan. His tent season will

open July 3 when a one ring circus will be staged carrying a midway which will play one and two night stands. Ray Alexander will be in charge of the midway. The show will have a calliope and a new light plant.

"Wiziarde reports crop conditions very good in Kansas. He visited Seal Bros. at Atwood, enjoying a reunion with old friends."

The July 1 issue of the Westmoreland *Recorder* had this reader: "J. O. Wiziarde, manager of the Wiziarde European Circus will open his yearly tour with a show at Westmoreland, Saturday (July 3). The show is bigger and better than ever and will make two appearances at 3:00 and 8:00 p.m. Buck Weir is with the show again this year and will do his slide for life. Frank Wiziarde will appear as Ko-Ko the clown. And many other performers have been hired to work in the circus. On Monday, the 5th the circus will make its appearance at the Wheaton picnic."

After the opening the show took off the next day, Sunday July 4, to move only a few miles to Wheaten for performances on Monday, July 5.

The July 1 Westmoreland *Recorder* ran an ad for the show's date at Wheaten plus another one for a big picnic, circus, dinner, and dance for the benefit of St. Michael's Parish Catholic Church. The circus ad listed seven merchants selling the special ten cent matinee tickets.

The July 8 issue of the *Recorder* had this to say: "The Fourth of July picnic held at Wheaten on Monday, the 5th, was a decided success. The picnic was held under auspices of the Wheaten Catholic Church and drew a crowd from miles around. Wiziarde's Circus showed at Wheaten in the afternoon and evening. A soft ball game was held in the afternoon between Wheaten and St. Mary's and a platform dance was held in the evening."

No review of the show appeared in the *Billboard* so the only information we

WIZIARDE NOVELTY CIRCUS



A half sheet stock poster used by Wiziarde. Circus World Museum collection.

have on the performance is that printed in the home town newspaper ad. With the circus reduced from two to one ring, the big top in all probability was the same as the previous year with the elimination of one middle piece. It would now be about a 60 with one 30. The show also likely dropped a few vehicles.

Opening day newspaper ad from June 24 Westmoreland *Recorder* used by the show in 1937. Kansas State Historical Society.

COMING SOON! COMING SOON!

WIZIARDE'S EUROPEAN CIRCUS

COMPLETE ONE-RING CIRCUS

**SEE: Pete, the High-Diving Dog; Tiny, trained mule;
Baldwin Trio, Comedy Globe Act; Wiziarde Family
Tight Wire Experts; Buck Weir, just back from Lon-
don, do his Slide for Life; Troupe Trained Ponies;
Frank Wiziarde as Ko-Ko the Clown; Jack Wiziarde
on the Flying Trapeze; Troupe Trained Dogs; Many
New Features and Faces; SEE BILLS FOR DATE.**

For several weeks in July the *Billboard* listed the show's route which was all in Kansas. No date was given for July 6, but on the 7th it was at Vermillion followed by Corning, 8; Emmett, 9; Delia, 10; Topeka, 12-17; Effingham, 20; Horton, 21; Emmett, 22, a repeat date or for some reason the first date on the 9th was missed; and Robinson, 23. The Marcks files also list only these stands.

Nothing further appeared in the trade publication regarding the Wiziarde circus until a short notice in the November 13, 1937 *Billboard*: "Owing to illness of J. O. and Frank Wiziarde, the Wiziarde show closed at Steele, Missouri and returned to Westmoreland, Kansas. The former has a badly infected throat and leaky heart, and latter has lobar pneumonia."

The focus of this article is the Wiziarde circus during 1936 and 1937 when it operated as a regular under canvas motorized show. Later the show returned to its 1929 to 1935 format. The Circus World Museum has a letterhead for The Wiziarde Novelty Trades Day Circus from 1940, indicating it was still out.

The August 21, 1943 *Billboard* contained a photo of Jack Wiziarde Jr. in a military uniform. The cutline read: "Pvt. Jack O. Wiziarde Jr., youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Wiziarde of the Wiziarde Novelty Circus is in the transportation division, 100 Air Base, H. Q. A. B., Alpena, Michigan. He is an all round circus performer."

According to *Variety* Lou (Mrs. Jack), Wiziarde died November 7, 1973. We have no additional information on other members of the family.

The author would like to thank Orin C. King, Fred D. Pfening Jr., and Fred Dahlinger Jr. of the Circus World Museum for their help and information in the preparation of this article.

The Other DAN CASTELLO CIRCUS, 1870

By Stuart Thayer

The circus that evolved into the P.T. Barnum show of 1871 was Dan Castello's Great Show & Egyptian Caravan of 1870. As has been chronicled, the company, owned by Castello and W.C. Coup, toured the Great Lakes on board the propeller driven *Benton* in that season.¹ In the Jacksonville, Oregon *Democratic News* of 30 July 1870 there appears an ad for Dan Castello's Circus & Menagerie, 2,000 miles west of Wisconsin, making the case for there being two Castello companies that season.

It was not unheard of for California showmen to adopt the names of well-known eastern titles. John Wilson did this with Dan Rice's name in 1860 and 1861, and again with Joe Pentland's name in 1862. Neither Rice nor Pentland was in the West in those years. We don't know if Wilson used the titles with permission or not, but if he didn't have it, he was only jeopardizing himself morally, for the most he could expect in punishment would be a restraining order.

However, the use of Castello's name in Oregon was perfectly legal, for it had been purchased when he sold his circus in California in 1869. It will be remembered that Dan Castello's Great Show of 1869 was the outfit that crossed the country, the first one to go from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Owned by Castello, James L. Nixon and Egbert Howes, the circus rode the Union Pacific Railroad from Omaha to California. Leaving Omaha on 27 May, it arrived in Truckee, California on 17 July. It then toured the Golden State until well into October. Robert Pepper found the latest date we know at 21 October in Redwood City. Shortly thereafter, the owners sold the property to parties named Leihy, Lake and Baker.² Of Baker, we know nothing, but Leihy & Lake's Overland Circus and Mena-

gerie had been on the road in California in 1868.

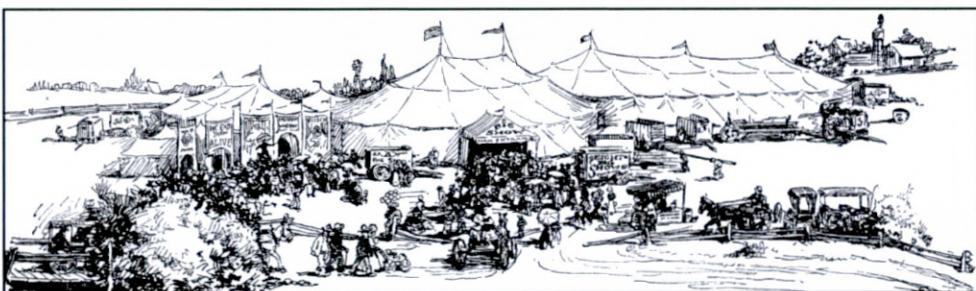
The trained horses of the Castello show belonged to Castello, the ring horses to the Lowanda family, and the band wagon and performing lions to Van Amburgh & Co. What the new owners got was the tent, the seats, the baggage wagons and the baggage horses, as far as can be determined.

John Wilson, the California showman, whose first year on the road was 1859, had a roofed amphitheatre constructed at the corner of Post and Sutter in San Francisco in December 1869. At some point in that off-season Wilson and Leihy, Lake & Baker joined forces. The proof of this was the announcement in the Victoria *British Colonist* on 6 April that, "The Bartholomew, Wilson and Castello circus companies have been consolidated in the 'Overland Circus,' and will come north next fall." This proved not to be exactly true as Bartholomew toured with his own show that season. Leihy, Lake & Co. moved their stock into Wilson's building and used it as a ring barn until they opened under canvas. There were a hundred horses, twelve ponies, a camel and a lama.

In the Don Francis list of San Francisco circuses there appears Leihy, Lake & Co.'s Overland Circus at the Jackson Street lot, between Montgomery and Kearney Streets, April 5-28, 1870. Wilson wasn't mentioned, but the performers were mostly from his 1869 roster. Only

Jule Kent, the clown, was from Castello's show of the year before. The tent was a 120-foot round with a forty-eight-foot center pole, new that year and described by the New York *Clipper* as the highest tent ever used. The height was necessary to accommodate the Rizarelli Brothers' trapeze act. These gentlemen had introduced the double passing act in 1867.³ The Rizarellis did not go on the road with the Overland, and the tent may not have gone either. The Virginia City paper described it as huge, and the Gold Hill paper said it was 115 x 150. Castello's canvas had been a seventy-five-foot round with a forty-foot middle, thus it must have been at least a two pole tent. It's entirely possible that if they used Castello's tent on the tour, the Virginia City reporter would have thought it "huge." There were twenty-four quarter poles, and the side poles were eighteen-feet high.

John Wilson was listed as manager, after the show cleared San Francisco; Leihy was the treasurer, and Omar Kingsley (once Ella Zoyara) was equestrian manager. The clowns were Kent and George Constable (who soon left to work for Bartholomew). The riders were Kingsley, Kent's daughters, Frannie and Frankie, Mile. Victorine, and one J. Williams. Mohammed's troupe of Bedouin Arab acrobats (five Moroccan teen-agers) was led by Mohammed, a strong man. A very talented apprentice from Peru, Master Gonzalez, was listed as an acrobat. However, the "star" turn of



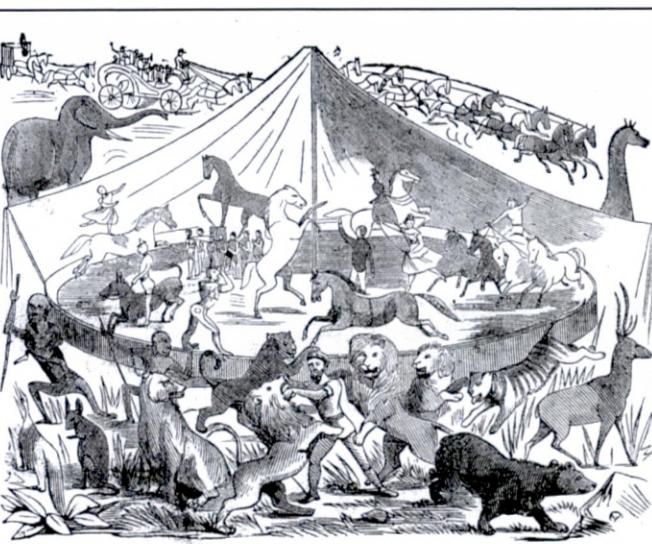
the show was the performance of a den of lions by Mans. Lambert. These came from the 1869 Wilson show. There was a concert company and a sideshow. Anna Swan, the giantess, was the best known feature in the sideshow.

The Overland Circus left San Francisco near to May 1. By the end of the month it had reached Sonora. Here it advertised itself as The Great Overland Circus and Menagerie from the Atlantic to the Pacific. This was obviously a reference to Castello's 1869 trek. Also, it was in Sonora that we first find mention of their bandwagon. They called it "Neptune's Titon-borne Sea Chariot," and said it had been made by Kimball & Co. of San Francisco. It was twenty-feet long and five-feet wide and had carved and gilded dragons on the front, and lion heads on the sides. It was drawn by an eight horse hitch. The claim was made that it cost \$4,800.

The taking of the national census of 1870 caught up with the circus in Gold Hill on 15 June, and from it we get more particulars of the troupe. There were twenty-two people, two of them females. These would be the Kent sisters; Mile. Virginie had obviously left. The median age of the company was twenty-four years. There were five members fifteen or younger. Only five of the troupe had been born in the United States. Seven were from Australia (Wilson had toured there in 1866-68). Six were Moroccan and three were Canadian. None of the managers were in Gold Hill.⁴

They reached Virginia City, Nevada July 2 for a three day stand. Silver City was played on July 7. The company seems to have split at this time. Wilson was back on the coast by July 27, as he performed that day and the two following in Oakland. Lake took the Castello show north to Oregon.

Michael Sporrer found the advertisement we spoke of in the Jacksonville, Oregon *Democratic News* of 30 July. This said that the



company would appear in Ashland, August 8; Jacksonville, August 9; and Rock Point, August 10. They gave as the title "Dan Castillo's (sic) Circus & Menagerie, a combination of the Overland and Great World."

Jule Kent was still with it, as was Mohammed's troupe of Arabs and the den of performing lions. Two parade wagons were mentioned, the Neptune Chariot and the Allegorical Car, the latter of which appeared on the street with a lion atop it. Sixty horses and sixty people were claimed, obviously a falsehood.

The route led north through Cottage Grove into Eugene and the Willamette Valley. Stands were made at Harrisburg, Monroe and Corvallis. At Albany, an August 22 date, the newspaper identified I. P. Lake as one of the proprietors. They proceeded through Brownsville, Lebanon, Scio and Silverton. In the Salem *Weekly Statesman* there was information that Lake and Goddard were the proprietors, and that Lake, a Portland horse dealer, had gone to California with a drove of horses, and returned with a circus. By this time Wilson, Leihy and Baker were obviously out of the concern, and in one more week Lake wished he was, as well.

The circus had advertised as far ahead as Walla Walla, Washington, far up the Columbia River basin, and projected showing in Puget Sound and Victoria and Westminster, British Columbia. The sheriff in Portland put an end to these plans by seizing the assets. The *Weekly*

Intelligencer in Seattle reported that the seizure was done "at the insistence of some unfeeling fellow who objected to being bilked." Thus, Dan Castello's Great Overland Circus of 1870 ceased to exist.

NOTES

1. Stuart Thayer, "Prelude to Barnum, the Coup and Castello Circus of 1870," *Bandwagon*, xx: 4 (1976), pp. 4-9.

2. John D. Draper, "The History of the Howes and the London Titles," *Bandwagon*, xxii: 1 (1978), p. 25. Draper identifies the purchasers as Lee, High & Baker; but the correct names are as we have given them.

3. Steve Gossard, *A Reckless Era of Aerial Performance the Evolution of Trapeze*, (Bloomington, IL 1994), p. 51.

4. Sherman L. Ricards and George M. Blackburn, "A Nineteenth Century Western Circus," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, xxii: 3 (Fall 1979).

BACK ISSUES OF BANDWAGON

1966-Jan.-Feb.
1967-July-Aug., Nov.-Dec.
1968-All but Jan.-Feb.
1969-July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1970-All but July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1971 -All but Mar.-Ap., May-June.
1972-All available.
1973-All but Nov.-Dec.
1974-All but Mar.-Ap., May-June.
1975-All available.
1976-All but Jan.-Feb., Nov.-Dec.
1977-All but Mar.-Ap.
1978-All available.
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BANDWAGON BACK ISSUES
2515 DORSET RD.
COLUMBUS, OH 48221

Side Lights On The Circus Business

PART ELEVEN

By David W. Watt

Editor's note: The dates listed are the days the articles appeared in the Janesville, Wisconsin Gazette.

October 4, 1913

The best indicator that I know of that there is a bumper cotton crop in the South this fall is the fact that both the large and the small shows seem to be all heading that way and the white tops will soon be showing in every important city and town. The circus trains are being hurried into southern territory to take advantage of the plentiful money that is in sight from the cotton crop which this year will be one of the best on record. This week the Barnum and Bailey show is at Danville, Virginia, the Ringlings are at Shreveport, Louisiana, the Hagenbeck and Wallace show is at New Orleans, the 101 Ranch is at Fort Scott, Kansas, and Sells-Floto at Louisville, Kentucky. It is fair to say that the advance men of all these different shows have been watching the indicator on the big clock of the cotton crop all the season.

An agreement has been signed by Roy Chandler, the South American manager, with Edward Arlington for the sending to South America of "a complete Wild West Show" with all equipment, blue seats, reserved seats, grand stand chairs and boxes to seat 3,500; flags, a canopy to cover all seats, sidewall scenery, tent, properties, wagons, draft horses for wagons, band wagons, steam calliope and lithographs. Mr. Arlington also is to furnish ten Indians, eight cowboys, six cowgirls, twenty horses and four bucking horses, a ten piece cowboy band, two Mexicans, two Cossacks, gun powder used in the performance, horse feed, steers used in the show and arms.

The program is to include steer

lassoing, horse lassoing, bronco busting, stage coach attack, wagon train, fancy rope spinning, sharpshooting, auto polo and other Wild West acts. The engagement is for six months commencing at Japanese Park, Buenos Aires, Argentina, December 1st, with the option for six months longer.

In '79 with the Burr Robbins Show, after making many of the smaller towns in the northern and western part of Illinois, we were billed to show in Illinois and from there we were to cross the river into Iowa and show at Sabula the following day. At that time there were no large bridges spanning the river. A small wooden ferry boat, which was worked with a rope and that had done service there for many years, was the only way for us to cross the river into Iowa.

Early in the evening a light rain commenced to fall and although it did not rain hard, it kept it up for most of the night. As soon as the

Edward Arlington took a wild west show to South America. All illustrations are from the Pfening Archives.



evening performance had commenced we took down the menagerie and moved the cages down to the river bank where we commenced to send them across the river. On account of the primitive way of getting over we knew that it would be an all night job and some of the large wagons it was possible to take only one at a time. Sometime along after midnight I declared myself and said that things were not going nearly as fast as they should and that we would never get over to Sabula to show the next day if they did not move faster.

The old captain of the ferryboat, who looked as though he might have come there ahead of civilization, looked at me and said, "I was at your show all the afternoon and not once did I even mention how you should run it. I know all about this transportation." It was well nigh 9 o'clock in the morning before the last wagon crossed the river. More than fifty working men and myself had put in the night on that river in the mud and rain and this was one trip long to be remembered in the wagon show business of Burr Robbins.

Before an audience that crowded the immense top of the Sells-Floto Circus to the ring banks on September 2nd at Detroit, several thousand outside clamoring for admission, Colonel W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) made his first public appearance since the occurrence which terminated the Buffalo Bill-Pawnee Bill Wild West Shows and officially refuted the widespread reports that he had retired from the show business for all time.

When Col. Cody strode over to the center ring and lifted his sombrero in salutation, the audience rose en masse and gave him a greeting that would have honored an emperor. The

cheering and applause rattled and rolled under the big top like a continuous racket of musketry. It was repeated again and again despite the fact that time and time again the old scout waved his hand, beseeching silence, that he should be heard. When the ovation in some measure subsided, Colonel Cody said in part:

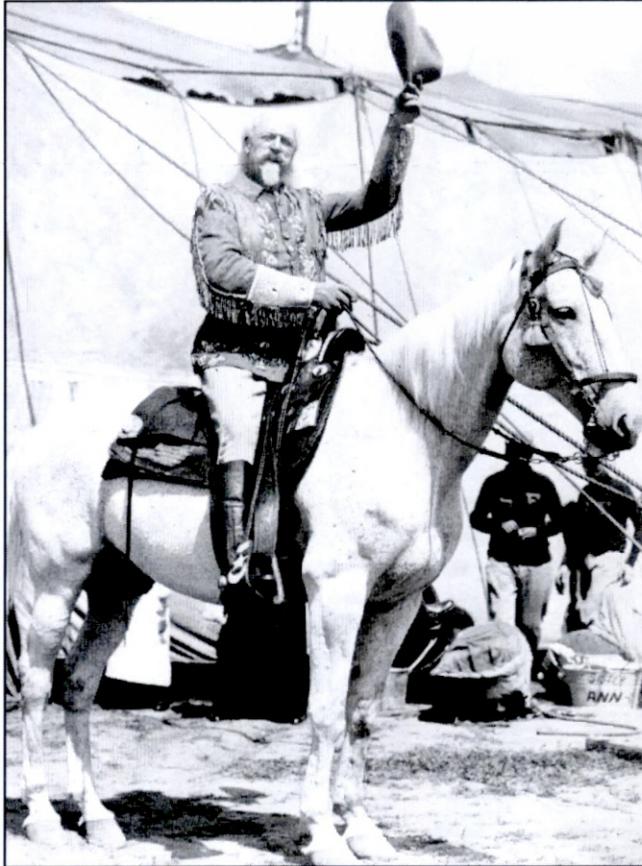
"I need not say to you, my friends of Detroit, to the ladies and gentlemen, and last but not least, the little children, that is more than flattering to me to be the object of such a tremendous expression of goodwill and loving regard.

"You know that nearly every paper in the country has recently told the story of how I have been wiped off the map and had passed out as a factor in the show business. I am here today as a visitor and it is at the request of my friends and in justice to them that I came here in my own person to assure you that the stories you read were without foundation.

"For thirty years I have been helping to entertain you here in Detroit. Your patronage has always been as liberal and generous as was your kindly manifestation today. I don't know of any city that has continuously given me more sterling support, and I can't think of any place where I would be more in honor bound to come and assure you that even if any obituary had been written, I was resurrected.

"In the army when the white man was fighting the red man and during the stirring incidents of the Civil War, I became accustomed to reading my obituary about once a week. Nowadays I have become such an unimportant person that the newspapers kill me off only about twice a year.

"But as I said, you can see for yourselves I am a long way from the danger line and I know you will be glad to learn that for next season I have formed a combination with my good friends, Messrs. Tammens and Bonfils, owners of this, the Sells-



Buffalo Bill Cody on Sells-Floto in 1914.

Floto Circus, and together next season we will combine my own original production of western scenes and incidents staged in a manner regardless of expense and delightfully elaborated, added to the full performance of the Sells-Floto Circus as it is entertaining you today. Think of that (tremendous applause). I do not exaggerate when I say that we will have the largest tent ever pitched. It will be capable of seating 16,000 people, and if this kind of talk sounds like a man who has outlived his usefulness, I am willing to be that man.

"I thank you again from my heart; your reception of me today has done more than anything I can think of to rehabilitate and assure me, did I have any feeling of temerity regarding my future."

The following tribute paid to "Big Tim" Sullivan I took from the New York *Clipper* and it is from the pen of Joe Hepp, who is one of the regular weekly contributors to this valuable paper. In his description of shows and show people Joe Hepp has a way

of his own and thousands of show people all over the country are interested in Joe Hepp's column in the *Clipper*.

"Big Tim" has passed out--the King of the Bowery is dead. Never did a king in all the history of the world sway his subjects as did 'Big Tim.' They loved him and he was one of them. Riches did not make him proud, and only stimulated his charity. Simplicity, after all, is the only true test of greatness and 'Big Tim' was simple, homely and ever approachable to the most humble of his admirers.

"In the passing of Tim Sullivan the theatrical world has suffered a severe loss. High minded, generous to a fault, ever responsive to suggestions, eager to carry out good ones and in every way doing all he could to further the interests of his associates in an aggressive, honorable manner 'Big Tim' played an important part in the progress of the profession of entertainment in this country."

Evolving from a newsboy to the halls of Congress in Washington, it seems a pity that 'Big Tim' should have passed as he did, but in the years to come thousands of people who have enjoyed his bounty, show folks who have had an opportunity to know his sterling worth, his intimate associates and his friends will pay reverence to his memory."

October 11, 1913

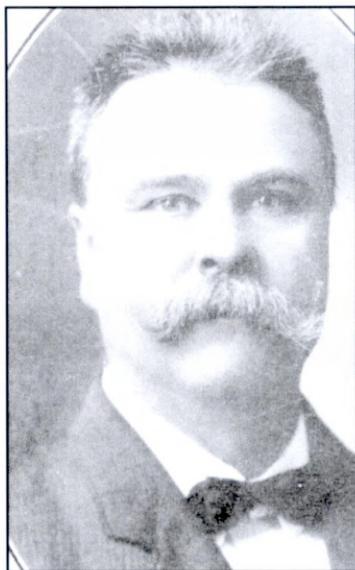
And now I want to tell you something about the advancement of the Barnum and the Forepaugh shows for many years back and a few of them who are still in the business.

One of the oldest and best known men thirty-five years ago in the business was R. S. Dingess, familiarly known around the show as "Bob" Dingess. Dingess was general agent ahead of the Adam Forepaugh show away back in the seventies when they traveled all over the United States by wagon. While Bob Dingess

was thorough in his work in the business, he was not what you might call a companionable man, for he wore a bad scowl on his face that must have been made of buckskin or corduroy as he wore it for at least twenty-five years that I know of, and the last time I saw him it was still in good condition. But Dingess was a tireless worker and could always be found at his post early and late and many a long trip would he make over the country during the show season, looking up the best possible country to take the show into. He could not do very much the last few years of his life in the way of advance work with the show, but he was never taken off the payroll.

It was early in the eighties that the white elephant war was on between the Barnum and the Forepaugh Shows. During this time the services of high class men in advance of these two great shows were always in demand, and they could always command big salaries. The white elephant season Adam Forepaugh engaged what was known as the big trio, J. E. Warner, William Durand and Charles Fuller. These were supposedly the highest class men in the business. J. E. Warner, whose home was in Lansing, Mich., was general agent ahead. Mr. Warner had been mayor of Lansing several different times and was a well-to-do businessman in that city. William Durand was a newspaperman and his home was in Indianapolis, Ind. Charles Fuller was the railroad contracting agent and his home was in New York City. These three men for their services for the season received \$7,000 each and all their expenses. But the bitter feeling which had existed between the two shows for many years was brought to a close the latter part of the season as a compromise and a division of the country put the long warfare to an end and this, too, meant a difference in the salaries of these men.

Louis E. Cooke was another



advance man of high order whose home is in Newark, N. J. where he owns a handsome hotel and other business property and for some years has been in advance of the Buffalo Bill Show.

Louis E. Cooke, long time advance man for Buffalo Bill.

Charles Day was another high class newspaperman in those days and it was his idea that brought Louise Montague as the \$10,000 beauty, the greatest drawing card for a circus (unless it was Jumbo), than any show has ever had. Charlie Day had many good original ideas and he was another that Adam Forepaugh held in high esteem. He died at his home in Connecticut about a year and a half ago.

There are still others that were a little younger in the business and are still in the service. There is George K. Steele, who before going to the Adam Forepaugh show was in advance of the Burr Robbins show for several years. Mike Coyle was a railroad contractor for the Forepaugh, the Barnum and the Buffalo Bill shows for many years. Mike's home is at Weedsport, New York, about fourteen miles southeast of Syracuse. W. D. Coxey is with the 101 Ranch and his home is in the suburbs of Chicago; and Robert C. Campbell, whose home prior to his death was on the Hudson River near New York City.

You may wonder that I can recollect all these men and their given names for so many years, but they were my weekly correspondents for more than ten years, and at the close of their contracts on Saturday night for the week each of these men would enclose them in a large envelope and send them back to me, many times with instructions, 66 different kinds to be looked into, when we would arrive at such and such a town. These instructions were as to the

location of the lot, the unloading place in the railroad yards, the different owners of the billboards, all of which had to be looked after carefully everyday to see if there was anything out of the ordinary to be attended to. It was close connections in a business way of this kind for years that made us like one large family. Every spring when the show would open in Philadelphia nearly all the heads of the different departments, both ahead and back with the show, were there in their old familiar places.

There was one familiar face around the show for many years that I have neglected to mention and that was an old lady known around the show as "Mother" Matthews. She was the wardrobe woman there for some years, and while she had one or two assistants who would change every year, Mother Matthews was always there, early and late, to look after the wardrobe. The wardrobe that Mrs. Matthews looked after was that used in the parade and in the grand entry. It was her business to get everything out of the wardrobe trunks, put them back and see that they were kept in good condition. Mrs. Matthews kept this position with the show until the death of Adam Forepaugh.

It was in the early eighties that the first big hippodromes were started by the Barnum and the Forepaugh shows and the first spring they were introduced Mr. Forepaugh imported about twenty-five thoroughbred running horses from England and some four or five jockeys came over with them. These jockeys were men of some note in Europe or at least had been, but for some reason or other were not driving in the big races on the tracks and had to do the next best thing, so they came over to America and drove in the hippodrome races that season.

These people drift from one part of the world to another. There is one with the show, "The Whip," at the Auditorium in Chicago now who was famous the world over as a jockey only a few years ago. His name is Percy Kent and just now he is "down on his luck," he says and is glad to turn his hand to acting a little and acting as dresser for the villain, Charles Backall.

"I came to this country," he says, "with a chap who promised to get me a good position in a stable over here. When I arrived I found that racing in the United States was almost dead and that the promised position was only in the imagination of the fellow who brought me over. I was up against it. I applied to Durland's Riding Academy in New York for a job--I had been with the Badminton Riding School in London, you know--but Durland's had no opening for me. I couldn't find a job of any sort until one day Mr. Backall met me on the street. He had known me in South Africa when he was a captain of the Buffs and I was in the remount division during the Boer War. He asked me if I'd like to go on the stage and with nothing else to do and a chance to be with horses, I accepted."

October 18, 1913

I am going to tell you something about the way of living in the early days with the wagon show and something about the changes that came later in the business. In '78, which was my first year with the Burr Robbins show, we went into what was called the Far West at that time, which meant Kansas and Nebraska. Then the towns were few and far between. A man by the name of A. R. Tole did the catering for the working people and ran what was known around the show as the workingmen's cook tent. Mr. Tole drove over the road with a single horse and buggy. All the heaviest equipment of his large tent was packed in a four horse wagon. All his edibles were drawn by two horses so that Mr. Tole's outfit consisted of seven horses. There were about fifty-five to sixty men for Mr. Tole to provide for three times a day and it was very often in that country that the first breakfast in the morning would be called at 12 o'clock. Many of the towns in that country were from twenty-five to forty miles apart and in cases of this kind the breakfasts and the dinners would be as far apart as the towns. I say breakfast and dinner, for in those days there was no such thing as luncheons. It was plain breakfast, dinner and supper.



Charles H. Day, press agent, historian, and route book editor

The breakfast would usually consist of beef steak--not always the porterhouse kind--and potatoes with their overcoats on. French fried, au gratin or O'Brien were not known in those days, especially at the Hotel de Tole. Although Mr. Tole's three meals a day were of the plain variety, they served the purpose and everybody with the show was satisfied that Daddy Tole was running a first class restaurant.

Tole felt as though it was a question whether he could cater to them even in a plain way and come out even. But as time went on the shows grew larger and when all the larger shows finally took to the rails . . . you could walk into a circus cook tent and get almost anything that you could wish for.

Later when I joined the Forepaugh show and always during the early part of the season we would show New York, Philadelphia and all the larger eastern cities, everybody except the workingmen would pay their own hotel bills until the show got out to play one day stands. In New York we would play Madison Square Garden for eight weeks and could be in New York for eight weeks without at least taking one dinner at Delmonico's. I took one dinner there for the reason that I wanted to have it to say that I had been at

Delmonico's. But when I had settled the tab and tipped the waiter, it took me a long time to forget it.

There was Delmonico's in New York, Green's Restaurant in Philadelphia, Kinsley's in Chicago, all of which were the famous ones in those days in the different cities. You will often hear people say that they would like to do this or do that, or they would like to go here or go there, and I am going to tell you what I would like to do. I would like to go back to '78 on the wild prairies of Kansas and Nebraska and have those days over again in Daddy Tole's cook tent and sit down to breakfast at 12 o'clock at night with the rain dripping through the canvas onto my plate and have the same appetite for plain beef steak and potatoes with their jackets that I had then. This would be enough for me and you could have Delmonico's, Green's and Kinsley's for yours.

For those were the days of the plain people and I look back and think how little it took to satisfy us then. Little did we think in those days that in the near future we would be riding in automobiles, dancing the tango, riding in airplanes and receiving the regrets of our guests by wireless. But all this only goes to show that the old darkey was right when he said, "de world do move."

But all this talk is of yesterday and as the wishing game is a poor paying one, we will end this and tell you something about a famous hotel man and how he came to get his start in the business. George C. Boldt was a bus boy in a Philadelphia restaurant, but he isn't now. Those who were associated with him at this time say that he was a good bus boy. He soon became a full-fledged waiter and then a head waiter. About this time he was seized with a streak of wanderlust. He chicken farmed in Texas for a while and one night he had to climb up a tree to get away from a flood; he sat there and calmly watched his chicken coop being carried away in the current. Somebody came along with a skiff and Boldt's final destination from that tree top that night in Texas was New York City. He was steward in a country

club for a while and then went back to Philadelphia in charge of one of the better class restaurants. Then he took the Bellevue Hotel, a small brick structure on the present site of the Bellevue Stratford. About a year after this last move some event in Philadelphia caused all the hotels to be crowded.

A man and his wife drove in a carriage that particular night in front of Boldt's hotel in Philadelphia. The man sent the driver in for the clerk, but the clerk was busy and Boldt went himself. The man in the carriage stated he had neglected to telegraph ahead for quarters and asked if he could be accommodated. "Why, certainly," said Boldt. "If you will just wait until I can arrange an apartment."

Boldt made ready his own private rooms. They ordered dinner. Boldt had it prepared and served under his own supervision in the apartments of the guests. The next morning the man sent for Boldt and said, "I've been looking for you for twenty years."

That guest that night in Boldt's little old Bellevue Hotel has since invested twenty millions of dollars under Boldt's management, and his name was William Waldorf Astor. The properties that represent his investments are the Waldorf Astoria, New York and the Bellevue-Stratford, Philadelphia.

Popularity of "movie" shows was blamed for the appointment of the Central Trust Company of Chicago as receiver of a circus--Rice Bros. Colossal Railroad Shows. Mr. S. H. Vowell as head of the bankruptcy department of the banking institution stated that the whole astounding aggregation of etc., etc. was upon his individual hands.

The old college absurdity runs: The monkey he got drunk (intoxicated) And sat on the elephant's trunk.

The elephant sneezed and fell on his knees. And what become the monk.

But Mr. Vowell regards it as "no monkey business." What he is worrying about is what will become of several monkeys and the rest of a small menagerie.

"I suppose I'll be seeing things in

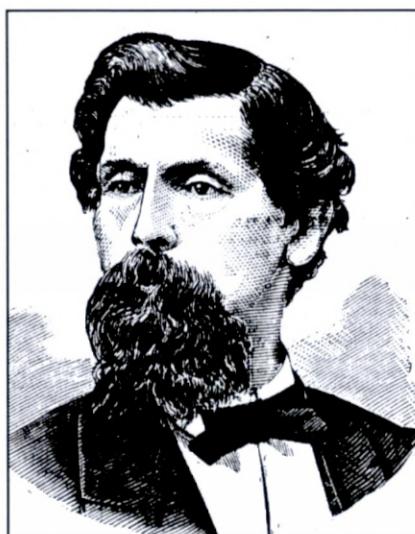
my sleep for weeks now," he said. "There'll be purple rabbits and pink lions and scarlet snakes with red white and blue frescoing. It will be horrible, I know." The result of it all, according to the receivers' agent, will be an auction sale in the near future.

"The dickens of it is that I don't know which are my animals," complained Mr. Vowell. "You see, the only assets of the circus in this district are a few beasts which were loaned to Lincoln Park. The main show is in Omaha. I was out at the park yesterday trying to identify my outfit, but Cy was in New York and no one seemed to know one animal from another.

"I know I've got a kangaroo, like Artemus Ward's. He is said to be a comical little cuss--very amusing and playful. I think there are some lions and tigers and somewhere there is an elephant. I don't know what is in Chicago and what is in Omaha. Meanwhile I have wired Cy De Vry in New York and asked him to hurry me a list of the circus animals he has in the park."

The petition was filed in United States District Court by Attorney Harry L. Lurle, representing Charles H. Wilcox of the United States Tent and Awning Company, and Charles B. Fredericks and was directed against John H. Garrett and Arthur Bowers, owners of the circus. Liabilities on the company are estimated at \$35,000 and assets at

Joel E. Warner, well known circus manager.



\$14,000. judge Carpenter of the Federal Court appointed the Central Trust Company receiver.

October 25, 1913

In my early days in the show business with the Burr Robbins Circus at the close of the season, I would always go back in the clothing store, of M. C. Smith and Son and work there during the winter. It was located where the Zeigler Company is now and at that time was one of the largest clothing stores in the state outside of Milwaukee.

A few years later when I was with the Adam Forepaugh Show I wrote my old employer and invited him to come to Chicago and be my guest for at least a day or two. We were to open there under canvas, for two weeks on the ground now occupied by the Fine Arts Building. On the first day of our opening, which was Monday morning, about nine o'clock, Dr. S. S. Judd drove up to the ticket wagon with the finest pair of carriage horses I think that ever left Janesville. As he knew Adam Forepaugh was an admirer of fine horses, he wanted to give him a ride down Michigan Avenue. They were gone about half an hour and when they returned Adam Forepaugh said, "Dave, I think this is the finest pair of horses that I ever sat behind." Only a few days later Dr. Judd sold them for something like \$2,000.

He had only been gone a few minutes when J. M. Hanchett, who at that time was keeping a high class livery stable on 12th Street between State and Wabash Avenue, drove up with a pair nearly, if not quite as fine, as Dr. Judd's and Mr. Forepaugh had to go for another ride down the avenue.

J. M. or Mark Hanchett, as he was familiarly known, was formerly a Janesville resident, but for many years was considered the highest class dealer in fine carriages and saddle horses in Chicago and numbered among his many customers such men as Potter Palmer, Marshall Field, Levi Z. Leiter and J. V. Farwell. These men would simply say to Mr. Hanchett, "I am in need of another carriage team," and the rest of it was left to the good judgment of Mark Hanchett.

Mr. Forepaugh and Mr. Hanchett returned in about an hour and just as Mr. Forepaugh stepped out of the carriage, M. C. Smith walked onto the show grounds and I had another friend to introduce to Mr. Forepaugh. As I had to spend all my time in the ticket wagon, Mr. Forepaugh took charge of Mr. Smith, and took him through the show from the front door to the dressing room, introducing him to many of the principal performers. Mr. Smith put in his entire day as my guest at the show and when he bade me good-bye that evening, he said, "Dave, this has been one of the most delightful days of my life. I have seen more today and know more about the business than I had ever anticipated.

That evening when Adam Forepaugh was counting up the day's receipts he said to me, "Dave, you have certainly introduced me to three high class friends. Have you any more of that kind in Janesville?"

I said, "Yes, governor, we have got plenty of that kind." With a smile on his face he looked over his glasses and said, "No, I don't think you can find three men like that in the state." I think this was true.

While they were all nearly three score years and ten with many years piled up behind them, there were many of those years; that did not count, for they were all three members of the Sunshine Club and had lived that way all their lives. They had all traveled the country over, had brushed up against people in a business in a social way and they were much younger than many men of half their age.

It was this same season that along late in the fall we went south for a few weeks before closing the show and that in those days was the country where you could see interesting sights and interesting people. Almost anytime after midnight many of the old colored people and hundreds of little black pickaninnies would gather at the railroad station where they would build their bonfires to keep warm and wait the coming of the great show. While there were many of these people who did not have the price to go to the show, they were around the canvas all day looking at the sideshow banners and listening



to the music. After the show had gone, all those colored people had been to the show just the same and had many interesting stories to tell their friends about what they saw with the big circus.

This is about the time of year that the shows are heading toward their winter quarters, and a few of them at least have already closed the season. Gollmar Brothers closed week before last and are already in their winter quarters at Denver, Colo. [actually Baraboo, Wisconsin]. The Ringlings will close on November 1 down in Texas and ship from there direct to Baraboo. Already some of the larger shows are now on the road and some new projects are underway for the Panama Pacific Exposition. Lorenz Hagenbeck of Germany was in Cincinnati a few days ago making his headquarters at the Zoological Gardens where Sol Stephan, Hagenbeck's American representative, is superintendent. It is said that one of the purposes of his trip is to lay the foundation for an animal show to be put on at the Panama Pacific Exposition which will be one of the most wonderful exhibitions of its kind ever staged.

A large booking has begun in connection with the Big Circus which Charles B. Cochran is to run at Olympia from next Christmas onwards in conjunction with the Carl Hagenbeck's Wonder Zoo. Would be purchasers of seats need not be alarmed for there are still a fair number of seats awaiting their attention. Skirting the area are to be forty daintily furnished boxes, holding from six to ten persons. It is the best of these which has just been secured for the entire run of the show by a

gentleman occupying a prominent position in the world of high finance and a constant attendant at first nights. There he proposes to entertain his numerous grandchildren and their little friends in detachments from day to day.

I want to tell you something about my first visit to New York City which was made in connection with the Adam Forepaugh show. I arrived at the New York Central Depot at 42nd Street. At that time there was but one large building anywhere near the depot, and this was the Grand Central Hotel. From there I took a horse car downtown and we had driven several blocks toward the main part of the city before we passed any buildings of note. But today some of the finest theaters in New York City are built miles and miles beyond this point. This season a man by the name of Marcus Loew has just finished one of the finest theaters in New York City which opened as a vaudeville house October 18. Mr. Loew has made millions in the business and all within the last ten or twelve years. It is only the vast amount of business that these houses do that make it possible for them to be paying investments, for they cost a world of money to build.

This new theater which cost \$900,000 is located on Third Avenue between 86' and 87' Streets and is known as Loew's Orpheum. It is the handsomest and most beautiful of all his theaters. The interior decorations are unusually striking. The theater has but one balcony which will seat 1,500--the largest theater balcony in New York. It extends over halfway out over the orchestra seats and is suspended by the latest invention without supporting posts to interfere with the vision. There are four landings to get to the top of the balcony with a mezzanine floor and rest room on each. The theater has two ladies' retiring rooms and two gentlemen's smoking rooms.

The new playhouse brings the number of theaters owned by Loew in greater New York to over a score and indicates a remarkable expansion in the eight years he has been in theatricals in this city. This last theater is his crowning triumph. The theater will be devoted to the usual

brand of Loew vaudeville and in spite of its beauty and enormous cost, the prices will be the same as at his other houses. Seats all over the house at matinees will be ten cents, and at night, ten, fifteen and twenty-five cents.

November 1, 1913

One of the finest ticket wagons that ever was built was with the Forepaugh Show in eighty-two which was my first year with that show. There were plate glass mirrors on both sides of the wagon, four large, carved images, one on each corner, and the balance of the ends and sides were filled in with the heads of different animals beautifully carved in wood and the entire wagon was covered with gold leaf. But this beautiful wagon was entirely unfit for a large show like the Forepaugh. It was barely high enough for me to stand up in with my hat off and it was more than two feet too narrow and the wheels were more than a foot higher than they should have been.

The show had only been out a few days when the immense crowds would push this light wagon in every direction on the show ground. Sometimes when the show was over the wagon would be more than one hundred feet from where it was originally located in front of the main entrance.

I said to Mr. Forepaugh one day, "This kind of a ticket wagon for a big show is a farce." There was only room for two small safes and scarcely room for two people in front of a large table in the center to count up the tickets from the main entrance which was done every afternoon and evening.

He said to me, "Dave, when the show closes you go to the superintendent at the winter quarters, order you such a ticket wagon as you think best and it will be ready for next spring's work."

I told him something about the style of the wagon that I thought we should have, that it should be much wider and with three compartments in it and with weight enough so that when the hind wheels were low-

ered four or five inches into the ground that no kind of a crowd could move it.

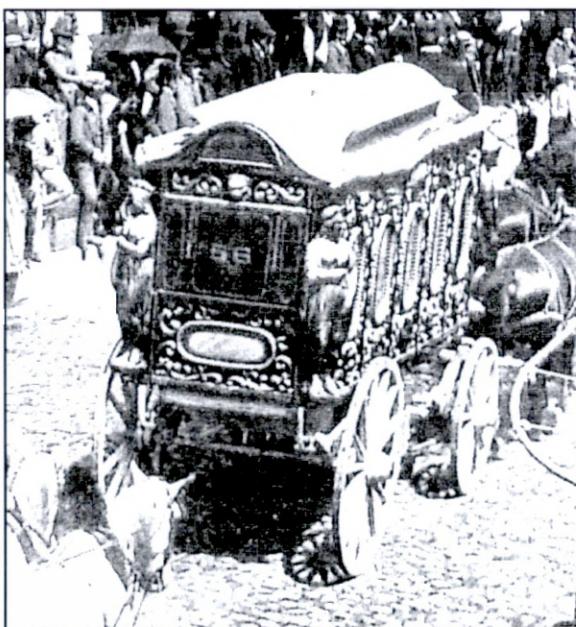
He said, "I think your idea is a good one and I will leave that all to you."

At the close of the season the superintendent at the winter quarters who built all the cars, cages and baggage wagons for the show, and myself, drew plans for a new wagon. The following spring when it was placed on the show grounds we had three heavy safes bolted to the floor and after I got things arranged, I called the governor into the wagon to take a look at it. I said, "This looks a little more like doing business than the featherweight that we had last season."

The governor said, "Well, Dave, this certainly is the right kind. Do you know this is almost as large as the first house I lived in when I was married."

This wagon, on account of its heavy weight had a peculiar click to it when it was being hauled to and from the show grounds and you could tell it blocks away. Something like six or seven years ago the Ringling Circus was showing in Madison on the third of July, and I took an early train to spend the day at the show. They had

The Forepaugh ticket wagon with mirrors on the side. Circus World Museum collection.



showed in Milwaukee the day before and the long haul from the show grounds there to the railroad yards made them late in leaving Milwaukee. As they were running four sections, the last section did not arrive in Madison until after nine o'clock in the morning.

The show grounds in Madison were three miles from where they unloaded so that it was eleven o'clock before the last of the wagons arrived on the show grounds. I went out to the show grounds about eleven o'clock and part of the parade was already pulled out onto the street and everybody was hustling to get the parade started.

Rody Royal, the horse trainer, was the man who always looked up the route of the parade and rode in the parade in the lead. As soon as I arrived on the lot Mr. Royal said, "Jump in that carriage there and start this parade and keep it going until I overtake you. We will all stay back here getting the wagons in line." Just before we arrived at the square in Madison, Mr. Royal came up on horseback, gave his horse to another man and got in the carriage with me as he had the paper showing the different streets that the parade was to pass over. It was almost one o'clock when we got back to the show grounds. Something like two or three blocks from the show grounds we found Delavan, the boss hostler, and he said, "I want you to get out here and see the parade yourself. You've been ahead all the time and don't know anything about it."

Two of the Ringlings soon joined us. They were pointing out new carriages and tableaus that they had built the past winter, and in a few minutes I heard the clicking noise of a wagon that sounded to me like an old friend. I said to Delavan, "There is the old ticket wagon somewhere down the line, for there's no wagon ever had a voice like that one."

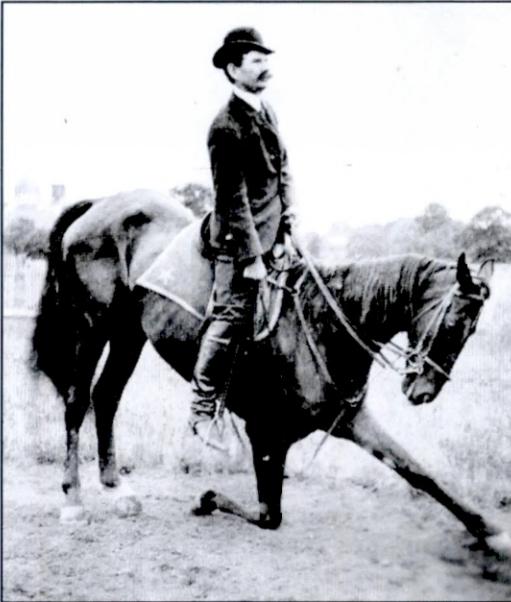
"Well," he said, "you must be crazy. That's a big tableau that you hear coming and that old ticket wagon of yours has been out of commission for many years."

I said to him, "You may call it a tableau or what you please, but there never was a wagon made a noise like that but the old ticket wagon that I had built under my own supervision at the winter quarters of the Forepaugh Show in Philadelphia." It was only a minute longer till, sure enough, the big tableau came into sight.

I said to him when he showed me the big wagon and gave me the laugh, "You may have a new face, but the movement is there just the same." After the parade had gone by I went up into the lot and found the tableau and looked it over and sure enough, there was the same running gear that was under the old ticket wagon and put there in the early eighties.

For ten years when we would be late getting into a town in the morning I had anxiously waited to hear the noise of the old wagon coming as I wanted to get to work and many people would be waiting for their complimentary tickets so that they could distribute them in the forenoon. Many a time at night I have waited till midnight and after at the railroad yards for I sometimes would forget and leave papers in the wagon that I would have to have in the morning. So that I had become familiar with the clicking noise of the running gear of that old wagon and fifteen years later when I heard it in Madison, I knew it was the same one that I had listened to for so many years, for I could tell it as quickly as I could tell the face of an old friend. But Delavan was honest in his opinion for he had no idea but what the big tableau was a new one throughout. The best act that I saw with the show that day was to take another look at even a part of the old ticket wagon where I had spent ten years of the best part of my life and handled millions of dollars.

At Mr. Forepaugh's death the show passed into the hands of the Barnum Show and a few years later was consolidated with the Sells Brothers. A little later the



Rhoda Royal on Ringling Bros. in 1904.

Forepaugh and Sells passed into the hands of the Ringlings and today there are few relics of the once famous Adam Forepaugh show left.

In the early days with the Forepaugh Show we had many new features which came from Europe and for these the great showmen of

Leonati rode a bicycle down a spiral on Adam Forepaugh in 1882.



this country had to pay fabulous prices for, as a rule, it was hard to get these performers to cross the water to America where they were lead to believe by European managers that they would have to encounter all kinds of hardships and that much of the time would be spent on the frontier where they would have to take a chance on their lives with the Indians and desperadoes of the Far West.

Many of these performers of different kinds got three and four times the salary from the American managers than they could get in Europe, but for the most part, these people were good livers and would always lay aside every week a goodly sum to be spent in America for good living and novelties to take back with them on their return.

August Rentz and his daughter, Louise, who was the greatest bareback rider I ever saw, had salaries of \$350 a week and every Wednesday they would send home \$300 and keep \$50 out for spending money until the next salary day. It was often two or three times a week that they would stop at the ticket wagon and wait until I got through with my work and take me to lunch with

them. The father could talk a little English, but Louise could not speak a word. But they were always ready to spend their money with people that they liked and although their language was broken, they were good company.

Leonati, another European performer who rode a bicycle down a spiral, drew the same salary and he, too, kept out \$50 a week for spending money and would always have two or three with him to luncheon every evening, for circus people always had lunch after the night performance.

There was the Lloyd family, a father and two sons, all riders and high wire performers, and their salaries were \$250 a week. A quart of milk and a five

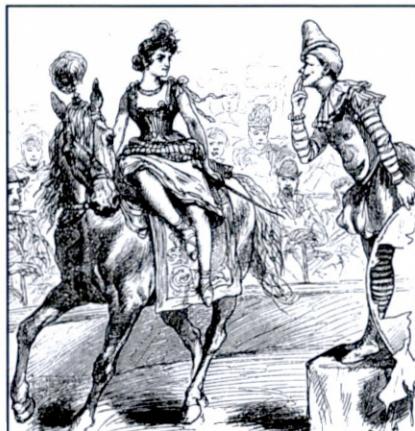
cent loaf of bread was their lunch in the evening and they would always enjoy this near the sleeping cars after the evening show. It was fair to say that the Lloyd family took more than 99 percent of their salaries back to England. But as a rule, most of those high salaried people were good spenders and always ready to entertain their friends.

Annie Oakley, who finished her third successful season with the Young Buffalo Shows at Marion, Illinois October 4, making her thirteenth year of almost continuous shooting, is now building a \$10,000 home at Cambridge, Md.

The famous battle between the whites and Indians at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on December 29, 1890, was re-enacted on the old battlefield October 13' before the moving picture machines with Buffalo Bill, General Nelson A. Miles, Sioux warriors and United States regulars in their original roles. It was fought in as historically correct a manner as the minds of men can make it and no details were neglected. The parleys, the demand for the surrender of the army by the Indians, the attempt to force the surrender and finally the battle which resulted in the wiping out of Big Foot's band and of the features, none was lacking in the fight within the Indian lines where Captain Wallace was killed. Father Craft [was] stabbed and the nose of Phillip Wells [was] severed and then sewed on again. All these things were done again before the camera and in exactly the way that they happened twenty-three years ago. From Wounded Knee the great camp moved on to Pine Ridge. There the battle upon the mission was put upon the film with the final surrender of the Indians to Lt. Gen. Miles, the review of the troops and the delivery of hostages. The pictures are being made by the Essanay Company for the Col. W. F. Cody Buffalo Bill Historical Film Company which was formed recently by Colonel Cody, H. H. Tammen and F. G. Bonfils.

November 8, 1913

From the middle seventies along to about eighty-one with the Burr Robbins Show was a man by the



name of R. Moodey, whose *nom de plume* was Diabola, the Fire King. "Dib," as he was known in show business, made the concert announcements in the big show, did his fire eating act in both the concert and the sideshow and also his lightning change act in which he was known as the man with fifty faces. Dib was the most useful man in his line of work that I ever knew and was always on the job. He always had a kind word and a smile for everybody. This was in the wagon show days and on many a dark and rainy night while passing Dib on the road he always had a word of cheer for everyone.

It was back in the fall of '78 after the close of the Burr Robbins Show that Dib and I got together and decided to start on the road with a hall show. I was to be contractor and business manager and Dib was to give the show. This was before the days of moving pictures or museums or cheap shows of any kind. We decided that \$4 would be our limit, for the halls that we would hire in the smaller towns and the advertising would consist of small dodgers. We would only bill the town two or three days ahead and then I would go back and sell the tickets and the owner of the hall would take them and Dib would run the show.

We opened at Milton Junction to a good house for that kind of an inexpensive show and it seemed to please the people fairly well. From there we went to Old Milton and Whitewater, Clinton Junction and then down into a few of the smaller towns in northern Illinois.

We showed in a small town one evening to a fair business, but the

hotel was a bad one. We had a very cold room and about the same kind of a breakfast, and by this time the business did not look any too good to me. There was a small room off of the office and about 9 o'clock in the morning Dib and I went into this room to talk over the advisability of going any further. We had just commenced talking over business when the landlord appeared and seemed to be anxious to know what was going on. Dib took a look at him and said, "Landlord, we came in here to talk over the advisability of taking this show south for the winter, and we would like to be left alone." The landlord excused himself and started out, but just as he got to the door he turned halfway round and said, "Well, I would think you had better take it somewhere."

I said to Dib that I thought we were carrying too many people with the show to make any money and that I thought I would start for Janesville. Dib said he would go on a few days longer, bill the show one day and show the next and a little later he would run into Janesville for the winter. This he did and made in a few days something like \$90 or \$100 and did all the work and gave the show himself. But it would take more than this kind of a show to satisfy the people even at the low price of fifteen cents admission, for it is possible now to see some good shows for that price. This was the only time that I ever was in the show business as one of the proprietors.

Frequent mention of Joe Hepp's writings, which are a feature of the New York *Clipper*, has been made in this column. For the benefit of those who do not know who Joe Hepp is, I am proud to announce that he is none other than Warren A. Patrick, formerly a resident of Janesville, and who obtained his early newspaper schooling in Janesville prior to 1895 when he joined the Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows as auditor. As a matter of fact, I was largely instrumental in starting "Pat" off on his circus career which extended over a period of twelve years.

Leaving the white tops after having been identified with a number of America's leading tented aggregations, Pat embarked in the amuse-

ment journalistic field. Now, writing under the *nom de plume* of "Joe Hepp" his department in the *New York Clipper*, America's oldest amusement journal, which is looked upon as an authority by show people in every branch of the business throughout the world, Patrick has built up a following which must be most gratifying to him and to the publication of which he is the western manager.

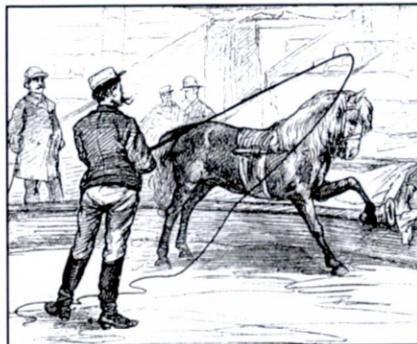
In devoting a few lines to Warren A. Patrick, I would fall short of my duty did I not at this time state that he was the founder of the Showmen's League of America, of which he is the secretary, an organization which includes in its membership the brightest minds in the tent show field of this country. Colonel W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) is the president and Colonel Charles W. Parker of Leavenworth, Kansas is the treasurer.

In the realm of entertainments, in many of its branches, Janesville has played an important part in furnishing men of ability. Modesty precludes extended mention of what I have done in the circus field, but I grasp this opportunity to give Warren A. Patrick due credit for the part he has played in the amusement business of America.

As is well known, his writings circulate throughout the universe wherever entertainment is offered and Joe Hepp's department is one of the most interesting features published.

I have the honor of being a charter member of the Showmen's League of America and I thoroughly appreciate what a wonderful work this organization will perform. Long after Warren A. Patrick has passed out, the name of Joe Hepp will linger in the minds of the tent show people and in the part he has played towards the uplift of the amusement business and the care of indigent showmen who spent their lives in active service on the tent show lots.

A few days ago I received the following letter from an old Janesville boy who is now an engineer for the Northwestern Road and makes his home in Chicago: "Chicago, Oct. 30th, 1913 Mr. D. W. Watt, Dear Sir: Your interesting articles in the *Gazette* on



show life I read with great pleasure. I have a collection of theatrical programs and circus bills dating from 1870. It is interesting to learn from your articles the whereabouts of the old celebrities. I have them in scrapbook form and I cut out the death notices from the papers and paste over the bills containing the name of the deceased.

"I would like to have you tell of the origin and whereabouts of the one time famous 'Wild Men of Borneo.' I saw them in 1866 and again in Janesville in about 1877 with the Barnum Show. I have photographs of them at both times I saw them.

"I see you noticed the death of John Dillon who used to be the greatest attraction of any traveling comedian forty-five years ago at Lappin's Hall and Myers Opera House. Was it not a misprint to call him a circus performer?

"I have the program of Buffalo Bill's first hall show in the play called 'Mary Cody,' given in Janesville. I think in the seventies.

"I was never in any way connected with the show business; I merely take an interest in such things or rather did years ago. I am an engineer on the C. & N.W. Road and lived in Janesville from 1868 until 1906 and take the *Gazette* and read your Side Lights and take the liberty of asking you about those two strange little men.

"I have old bills of Burr Robbins, W. W. Cole, the Coup Show in 1883, Barnum and Bailey years ago, and I treasure them highly. If you would care to see them, I would be pleased to show them to you at my home. I remain, yours truly, Austin Station CHARLES T. STEARNS, 837 Lorel Avenue Chicago, Ill."

November 15, 1913

With the Forepaugh Show for some years there was a young man who was known around the show as John Wanamaker. While he was known as the postmaster general, he was given the name for the reason that he was the mail carrier for the show people. His real name was Jules Turnour. Jules was an Englishman. His first business in the morning after breakfast was to go to the post office and present his order for all the mail belonging to the show. After arriving at the show grounds, he only had four stations where he left his mail--the ticket wagon, the sideshow, the menagerie and the dressing room. Being familiar with all the people of the show, he would always distribute his mail at the different places where the people would call for it. All the mail belonging to the business end of the show was left at the ticket wagon; all the mail for the workingmen in the menagerie; the performers in the dressing room and all of the privileges were left in the sideshow.

For this extra service Jules was given the right to issue the route cards of the show, which were always gotten out for one month ahead. He would usually have these printed on a small card, about one thousand at a time, and these he sold to the different people with the show for five cents apiece. They were sent in all directions so that the ones at home would always know where to reach the show. Always a week or ten days before the closing of the show in the fall there would be a paper started for the benefit of the postmaster general, as he was called with the show, and often the contributions would run up as high as \$200. He was always painstaking and careful with the mail and always carried a few stamps in his pocket in case one of the working men or anyone around the show would be out of money, he would always mail their letters for them. So that these two perquisites along with his salary would foot up in the fall to a goodly sum. Today Jules Turnour owns a nice fruit farm in Michigan. While he still is in the business in the summer season, his family reside on the farm where Jules is always to be found in the winter season.

Another character that I call to mind who was with the show for many years was a man known as "Big Bill the Trappings Man." Big Bill's work was to take care of the trappings for the riding stock, the performing horses, ponies, Performing elephants and the bare-back horses. It took several large, heavy, well-built boxes to hold these goods and many of them were quite valuable. Many of the riders had their own stock, the trappings always belonged to the show. The new ones that were provided in the winter quarters for the coming season were always used in the large cities, and only in good weather, as they always had three or four sets. The older ones were used on rainy days and all this was left to Big Bill.

The riders could dictate as to their horses, but when it came to the trappings Big Bill was always the doctor in charge of them. Many times the riders would be showing in towns where they had friends and although it might be a fair day with a muddy lot, they would usually want to show off their best and many times would go to Big Bill and explain to him, but nothing of this kind went with him. It was always a matter of business and no favors to anyone.

Big Bill was one of the night watchmen in the winter quarters and always spent the year around with the show. At the death of Adam Forepaugh, Big Bill was one of the real mourners, for he had been there for many years, had grown old in the business and did not know of any other way of making a living. But he was kept in the winter quarters after Mr. Forepaugh's death until the show passed into the hands of the Barnum people and it was then that Big Bill commenced to wonder what might possibly become of him.

In the meantime the new proprietors and their associates took charge of the show. One day while James E. Cooper was at the winter quarters Big Bill thought it was time for him to know his fate. He went to Mr. Cooper and asked him if he could get a job with the show.

"Well," Mr. Cooper said, "who are you?"

"Well," said he, "I'm the man they call Big Bill."

"Have you any recommendations?" said Mr. Cooper.

"No, sir," he said, "I don't know of anybody that would recommend me, but I've been with the show some time."

Mr. Cooper said to him, "Bill, how long have you been here?"

He said, "I've been here with Mr. Forepaugh winter and summer for fourteen years."

"What has been your business?"

"I have had charge of the trappings all of this time."

"Well," said Mr. Cooper, "your recommendations are certainly strong enough to warrant us keeping you and you may go back to the winter quarters and take charge of everything there in your line just as you did with Adam, and that probably will suit us."

Big Bill stayed with the show as long as it ran under the name of Forepaugh, but after it passed into the hands of the Ringlings, I have never heard anything from him. But he was the kind that was always faithful to his duty in his line of work and for many years Adam Forepaugh never questioned anything in Big Bill's department.

The following letter from Denver would certainly indicate that the United States is the one great market for wild animals of all kinds as all the great dealers of Europe are sending their agents to this country and are fitting out the different shows with animals of all kinds: Lorenzo Hagenbeck, son of the late Carl Hagenbeck, was in Denver



negotiating for the sale of the largest shipment of curios and rare animals ever brought to America, to be imported for the Buffalo Bill-Sells-Floto Shows for next season.

The Hagenbecks have two of the largest giraffes ever captured, one an Abyssinian, or netted giraffe, and the other a Tippelskirch. Only four of these animals have ever been in captivity and two of them died when shown by the Hagenbecks in New York after being there only three weeks. That was the only time animals of these varieties were ever imported to this country. The Hagenbecks, now being more acquainted with their habits, and knowing how to care for their health, believe that the two they are to import for the big combination will survive the ocean trip and that they will experience no difficulty in handling them in this country.

Another group of animals the German dealers are preparing to ship to the Buffalo Bill-Sells-Floto Shows consists of ten performing lions, four polar bears, two tigers and two dogs (all of which work together in one cage) and a large number of camels.

The Hagenbecks own the largest collection of animals in captivity in the world. They have an exhibition in their park at Stellingen near Hamburg, Germany, every variety of wild animal that is known to man. They are at present devoting much of their attention to ostrich raising. The Denver visitor believes this climate suitable to the ostrich raising industry, and it is probable that he may start an ostrich farm there.

Two mighty elephant hunters, J. Sutherland of Scotland and his partner, Capt. G. H. Anderson of Ireland, an officer in the Eighteenth Hussars, were passengers on the Carmania which arrived at New York from Liverpool on November 7th.

Mr. Sutherland's record is 481 bull elephants and 200 females killed in seventeen years in Africa. Capt. Anderson has been his hunting partner for about a year and a half.

In Pygmyland, which extends from Lake Albert to the west coast for a width of 300 miles, the two friends on returning from their hunt last year were fired upon by a drunken tribe of

pygmies. An arrow struck Sutherland's gun bearer in the shoulder while another arrow hit another man in the leg.

A parley was called in the Bangalla tongue with Chief Takio of the pygmies. Mr. Sutherland explained they were only after elephants. "Is that all?" replied Chief Takio. "We took you to be Belgians."

The pygmies live on honey, ants, birds and fruits and have eight kinds of wine, some made from palms and others from honey. They have no settled abode and wear next to nothing.

When Capt. Anderson faced his first elephant the two bullets he fired into the beast's forehead were not effective. His man discharged another gun, Capt. Anderson stumbled and the elephant fell dead within five or six yards of him. One of the elephant's tusks weighed 109 pounds and the other 111 pounds. In two and a half months they obtained five tons of ivory.

Capt. Anderson says no elephant's meat is wasted. The news is borne by the swiftest messengers to the nearest tribes when an elephant falls. The natives then come, perhaps 800 or 1,000 of them, and fall to with their knives upon the body and do not leave until the bones are picked clean.

Mr. Sutherland is the author of *Adventures of the Elephant Hunter*, published by the Macmillans and comes here with many letters from his publishers.

They have hundreds of pictures and will remain in this country for several months during which they will give lectures.

November 22, 1913

Many years ago with one of the greater shows of the country was a bareback rider whose fame was worldwide. I think without a doubt he was the greatest bareback rider before or since his time. This man was a hard worker in his business, often practicing his act between every afternoon and evening show so that he was wedded to his art--that of a great bareback rider. He was one of the best drawing cards that was possible for a manager to secure in those days and many times in large cities



there would be hundreds of people who knew about the time his act would go into the ring and they would buy tickets, come into the show, watch his act and go back again to their business.

But with all this the man was not a good fellow. While he absolutely knew nothing about the management of a great show, yet in his opinion he knew far more than his employer who had been in the business for more than a score of years. Many times he would make it his business to visit among the working people and the performers in the dressing tent, many of whom drew less than 10 percent possibly of his great salary, and try to impress upon them the necessity of their getting more money for their work. Many times he would talk to the working people about the cook tent and say to them that they should go in body to the management and demand better meals and better service.

Many times in the show business your contract would call for so much money, your meals and lodging, yet it was the custom on long Sunday runs or in case of a wreck when you would be late in getting into a town in the morning that everybody was supposed to look out for themselves. On Saturday everybody around the show, if it was to be a long Sunday run, could be found downtown at the different restaurants, getting their lunches ready for Sunday, for in such cases they always provided for themselves.

This great rider owned his own horse, one of the best ring horses in the business, and also had a groom to take care of him. He, too, bought lunches for himself and his groom, but kept account of everything he

spent in this way. When the season was about half over, he presented a bill to the ticket wagon of \$28.75 for money spent in this way and demanded payment for the same. The cashier in the wagon looked the bill over and said to him, "Why, I never paid a bill of this kind in my life. Don't you understand that everybody is supposed to look out for himself on long Sunday runs and at other times when it is impossible for the show to provide for them? I would not dare pay a bill of this kind without the O.K. of the management."

But this great rider insisted and finally went to the main entrance and after some talk with the manager, the manager finally O.K.'d the bill, and it was paid at the ticket wagon.

Now it was not more than two or three weeks till the rider's horse was taken lame and it was impossible for him to use him in the ring. His contract called for him to use his own horse for his act. There were some good ring horses with the show. To get one of these was the only way out of it for this rider to finish his season. He was given the best ring horse with the show. His own horse did not recover for the balance of the season. So he finished the season of something like eighteen weeks and all this time riding a horse that belonged to the show. His salary, or at least part of it, was gradually held back and when the season closed and the time came to settle, the management of the show charged him something like \$1,800 for the use of the horse.

This of course made trouble and it was taken into the courts and carried up to the Supreme Court and the great rider lost every suit. It not only cost him a lot of money, but it put him in bad with this show and with all the other shows. It was only a short time till this great rider was looking for a position with the smaller shows who could not afford to pay the salary he had been used to.

From this time on this great rider never got back to any of the big shows and many years ago he died a poor man, practically without friends. This only goes to show that be it with a circus or any other kind of business, it pays to be a good fellow

and do as others do in the business which you have chosen for your life's work. As the old saying goes, "If you're in Rome, be the least bit Romanish and you'll be better off."

For one who is continually carrying a grouch with him and finding fault, it is only a matter of time till his friends will be on the other side of the street. While you may be a booster and a good fellow and wear a smile at all times in your business and not get rich, yet you will be better satisfied with yourself and have more friends. Surely when the sun does shine, it will hit you part of the time.

Last Monday James K. Sebree died at his home, 1130 South Michigan Boulevard, Chicago. Jim Sebree, as he was familiarly known in Chicago, had been in the hotel business for nearly forty years. He was a character different from many others. It was in the fall of eighteen and seventy three that Jim Sebree came to Janesville with the Burr Robbins Show and spent the winter. The animal house, which served as a kind of headquarters for the people during the winter (for it was here that they had a kind of little office in one corner of the building), was the old stone structure that still stands in the rear of the city hall and is owned by Frank D. Kimball and used as a storehouse for furniture.

Jim Sebree boarded that winter at what was known as the Stevens House on the southwest corner of Dodge and Franklin Streets and is now known as the Interurban Hotel. A man by the name of Chauncey Stevens was the landlord and Mr.

Stevens had a family of two boys and one daughter. The daughter, an auburn haired girl of about sixteen years of age whose name was Capitola, was bright and smart and it was not long (I think it was the following year, possibly the spring of 1875) that Jim Sebree married Capitola and shortly after left for Chicago where he went into business and a few years later with a partner opened up the Saratoga Hotel. It soon became famous all over the country. It was here that Jim Sebree was to be found almost every day in the year for something like thirty years.

Through all these years I knew him well, and while he was a hard taskmaster to work for and a hard headed close-fisted businessman, yet Jim Sebree had a reputation that but few other hotel men ever had. It is known all over Chicago that he never turned a man out of his hotel for non-payment of a bill. In scores of cases where a man would get stranded there and expect money from home or from friends and would be disappointed, Jim Sebree would always help him out of town with \$10 or \$20 and many times would say to him, "Young man, if you get rich, you owe me this, but if you don't get rich, you owe me nothing."

Jim was naturally a speculator and carried through many big deals. A heavy mortgage or a big debt never bothered him if he thought it looked as though there was a bountiful harvest ahead. At the time of his death he was still the head of the Saratoga

Hotel Company, but his son Ray for some time has been the acting manager of the hostelry. Jim Sebree had amassed a fortune of half a million dollars, but his time came and he had to go just the same as the man that had not lived the busy life that he had. There will be many an old time showman that he has helped over the rough places in life who will mourn his loss.

McIntyre and Heath, who are now playing an engagement at the American Music Hall in Chicago were both originally with the circus. Heath being a clown and McIntyre a bareback rider. I think in the early seventies they put in at least part of one season with the Burr Robbins show.

They were the first to introduce the Negro dances on the stage forty years ago, and they have not been separated in forty years. McIntyre has earned \$300,000 in his "Georgia Minstrel" suit. Walking railroad ties after failure of their first minstrel show led to the creation of "ham tree" and "biscuit bush" over which the comedians have made millions laugh. Both learned all about Negroes whom they imitate while acting as cooks on Mississippi River steamers. Heath was born in Philadelphia and is 47 years old. McIntyre was born in Wisconsin and is 56 years old. They always occupy the same dressing room and have never had a disagreement. The contract with their manager is for four years at a joint salary of \$75,000 a season.

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